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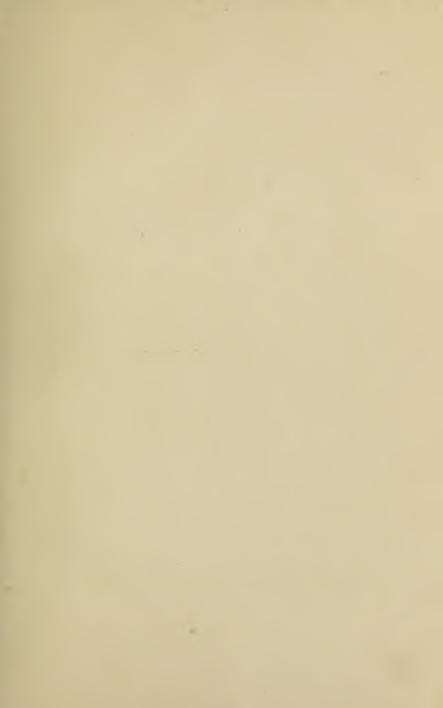
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REV. MOTHER M. XAVIER WARDE







Rev. Mother M. Xavier Warde.

Manchester M.H. Mount St. Mary's connect.

### REVEREND MOTHER

## M. XAVIER WARDE

Foundress of the Order of Mercy in the United States

#### THE STORY OF HER LIFE

WITH BRIEF SKETCHES OF HER FOUNDATIONS

By

#### THE SISTERS OF MERCY

Mount St. Mary's, Manchester, New Hampshire

PREFACE BY THE

RT. REV. DENIS M. BRADLEY, D.D.

BOSTON

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TO

#### MARY

MOTHER OF MERCY

THE TRUE IDEAL OF CHRISTIAN WOMANHOOD

WE DEDICATE THIS VOLUME



#### PREFACE

MY DEAR REV. MOTHER:

AM pleased to learn that the Sisters have prepared for publication the "Life of Rev. Mother Francis Xavier Warde." I desire to congratulate and thank the community for this new and important addition to the biographical literature of the early builders of God's Church in the United States. It is well and proper that Reverend Mother Xavier's life should be made known to the public by a member of that community last established by her personally, — a community in which she spent the greater portion of her American-religious life; a community guided and governed by her for so many years; a community imbibing, and, we hope, holding from her, the original spirit of the first Sisters of Mercy; and a community in the midst of whose departed members she rests to await with them the Resurrection.

This is a timely book. From it the young women of our day and country will learn that

the sure way of living in the minds and hearts of future generations is to use the gifts given by God in the upbuilding of His kingdom among men. From it they will likewise learn that "he that hateth his life in this world keepeth it unto life eternal," and "that every one that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands for His name's sake shall receive an hundred-fold, and shall possess life everlasting." In it they will see a young woman of refined education and ample means abandoning all that these could legitimately give, and associating herself in the bonds of "Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience, and the care of the poor, sick, and ignorant," with that God-sent woman, Catherine McAuley, the Foundress of the Sisters of Mercy. They will see this same young woman severing the yet few links that bound her to relatives, Sisters in religion, and country, and undergoing all the hardships of Atlantic travel in those days, and becoming in her turn a Foundress, -Foundress, namely, of the Sisters of Mercy in the United States. A glorious privilege! Behold, how many thousands of her daughters rise up in every portion of this great land and

call her blessed! They will learn from this volume that the difficulties incident to travel, and poverty among peoples of distant and sparsely-settled villages, and towns, and hamlets were no obstacle to her ardent zeal in the establishment, in the various parts of the country, of convents, schools, orphanages, hospitals, and of the doing of all the works prescribed and allowed by the rules and constitutions of the Sisters of Mercy. From this volume they will see, and, we trust, will imbibe that spirit of active union with God which characterized, if I may so speak, her settled life in our own Manchester.

We thank God for having sent her to us after her years of laborious wanderings, to be the foundress of religious life in the city and diocese of Manchester.

It is a pleasurable privilege to give our hearty approval of this Life of Reverend Mother Xavier.

In this connection I may be permitted a word personal. She it was who prepared me for the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation. She had charge of the class of instruction in Christian doctrine which I attended in my younger days. During my time at the College and Seminary she was always the earnest,

active, and helpful friend. In time, in God's providence, matters were so determined that I became her ecclesiastical Superior, and then, because of our relations, did I notice, in a striking manner, that which must arrest the attention of the reader of her life, namely, her esteem for the ecclesiastical state, and her reverence and respect for authority. The Sisters of the community who were associated with her will bear witness that these lessons were inculcated by her in season and out of season. It was my privilege to witness the holy death of this Christiansoldierly woman, to say a last word at her obsequies, to offer the last prayer of Holy Church at her grave, and to consign her body to mother earth, in the midst of her daughters who had preceded her in death, there "to wait for the Saviour, Our Lord Jesus Christ," whom she served so long and so well.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

\* DENIS M. BRADLEY.

Bishop of Manchester

Feast of St. Joseph, 1902.

## CONTENTS.

#### CHAPTER I.

THE CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH OF FRANCES WARDE.	
Her birth. — Early loss of her mother. — Her father's trials. — His death. — Her early training. — She receives her first Holy Communion and is confirmed. — She enters society. — Meets Mother McAuley	
, 20 20 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10	
CHAPTER II.	
EARLY DAYS AT BAGGOT STREET.	
The rising Institute. — Labors of mercy. — The new chapel. — Devotion to the sacred heart of Jesus. — Formation of the Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy	29
mercy	20
CHAPTER III.	
CHOLERA OF 1832. ESTABLISHING THE INSTITUTE IN CARLOW.	
Death of Sister M. Elizabeth Harley. — Work among the cholera patients. — Sister M. Francis Xavier pronounces her vows. — Her labors in Carlow. —	
Death of Bishop Nolan	40

CHAPIER IV.
FOUNDATIONS FROM CARLOW. DEATH OF THE FOUNDRESS. PAGE
Foundation of the order at Naas. — The spirit of charity and zeal. — Wexford. — Mother McAuley's
sickness and death 59
CHAPTER V.
tributes to the memory of the foundress. westport.
Mother McAuley's grave. — Tributes to her virtues and good works. — Summary of the works of mercy at the time of her death. — The Sisters of Mercy at Westport
CHAPTER VI.
FOUNDATION OF THE ORDER IN THE UNITED STATES.
Bishop O'Connor negotiates at Carlow for Sisters of Mercy.—The foundation undertaken.—On board the Queen of the West.—On American shores.  — First retreat in Pittsburg.—Works of mercy . 88
CHAPTER VII.
- EARLY DAYS IN PITTSBURG.
The first American Sister of Mercy. — First ceremonies of reception and profession. — Mother Warde's attention to the acquirement of solid piety 101

~							
C	O	n	t	e	n	t.	S

xiii

#### CHAPTER VIII.

FCTA	BLISHMENT	OF SCHOOLS	

ESTABLISHMENT OF SCHOOLS.	
First schools in Pittsburg.—Enumeration of studies.  —Attention given to formation of character.—  Visiting the prisoners	PAGE 108
CHAPTER IX.	
BISHOP O'CONNOR AND THE INSTITUTE.	
Death of Sister Philomena. — St. Xavier's Academy. — Glimpses of Bishop O'Connor's character. — The orphanage and hospital	119
CHAPTER X.	
FOUNDATION OF THE ORDER IN CHICAGO.	
Establishing the house in Chicago. — Practice of the smaller virtues. — Mother Warde's journey from Chicago to Pittsburg	133
CHAPTER XI.	
"THE APOSTLE OF THE ALLEGHANIES." LORETTO	•
Foundation of the order in Prince Gallitzin's domain.— Maxims for religious teachers.— Bishop O'Connor becomes a Jesuit	1 53
CHAPTER XII.	
EARLY DAYS IN PROVIDENCE.	
Establishing the first convent in Providence. — Difficulties experienced. — The parent house of New England. — Extension of education. — Father Mc-	

#### Contents

#### CHAPTER XIII

CIMII I BK MIII.	
PROGRESS OF THE INSTITUTE IN NEW ENGLAND	
Fostering the religious spirit. — Establishing a convent at Rochester. — Hartford and New Haven. — "Mother Angela." — Negotiations for a founda-	PAGE
tion in Manchester. — Sister Camillus Byrne	181
CHAPTER XIV.	
IN THE "GRANITE STATE."	
Foundation of the order in Manchester. — Night schools and instruction classes. — The free schools and Mount St. Mary's Academy. — Harriet Stanley	
Dix	201
CHAPTER XV.	
MOTHER WARDE'S LABORS IN MANCHESTER.	
The Sisters undertake the education of boys. — Older pupils become soldiers. — Holy poverty and labor. — Foundations and extensions of works of mercy. — Death of Bishop Bacon	220
CHAPTER XVI.	
LAST YEARS OF ACTIVE SERVICE.	
Death of Mother Pauline of Hartford.— The Indian missions in Maine.— Death of Mother Josephine Warde.— Fifty years a professed religious	243

#### CHAPTER XVII.

#### FAILING HEALTH AND DEATH.

	PAGE
A separate parent house at Portland. — August retreat	
of 1883. — A branch house at Dover. — Consecra-	
tion of the first Bishop of Manchester Mother	
Warde's death. — Her last resting-place. — Her	
spirit cherished in her community	266

## **ILLUSTRATIONS**

Rev. Mother M. Xavier Warde	•	Fron	tist	iece
Rev. Mother Mary Catherine McAuley	Fa	icing ;	pag	e 36
Convent of Mercy, Baggot Street, Dublin .	•	66	66	80
The Rt. Rev. Bishop O'Connor		"	"	90
The Rt. Rev. Bernard O'Reilly, D.D	•	"	66	164
St. Francis Xavier's Academy, Broad Street				
Providence	•		46	174
The Rev. Fr. McDonald	•	66	"	202
Mount St. Mary's Academy, Manchester .		66	"	218
The Rt. Rev. Bishop Bacon	•	"	"	240
The Rt. Rev. Denis M. Bradley, D.D	•	66	66	272

# The Story of the Life of Rev. Mother

## M. XAVIER WARDE

## Chapter I.

THE CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH OF FRANCES WARDE.

RANCES WARDE was born at Mountrath, Queen's County, Ireland. Amid the charming freshness of greensward and hedgerows, rippling streams and nooks of shrubbery, surrounding Belbrook House, her baby eyes opened in one of the most delightful spots in the dear old "Isle of Saints and Scholars." The time of her birth was about the year 1810, when the penal laws and the "Rebellion of '98" had left the sad traces of their unhallowed ravages on the prosperity and happiness of the Irish people.

The infant soul of Frances must have imbibed the beauty of her environment with every respiration of her young life; for, as a child, as a young woman, and as a religious, she was an intense lover of the beautiful in this world, and an ardent craver for the infinite beauty of Heaven.

The loftiness of purpose manifested in the life of this extraordinary woman, together with the retired state she chose in consecrating herself to God in an Order whose spirit breathes the lowliness of prayer and contemplation, combined with the humble service of the poor, sick, and ignorant, accord us not the privilege of commenting on the nobility of her birth, or the distinction of her ancestry. "Religion is God's democracy," is a truism oft quoted, and wisely, by every dispenser of the Sacred Word and master of the spiritual life. This religious principle is the true leveller of caste and race, of fortune and fame, since the days when the meek and loving Jesus of Nazareth trod this earth, sweetly solacing the weary and sorrowful of heart, whether sought for by the princely ruler Jairus, or by the lowly widow of Naim; whether moved to pity by the blind beggar on the wayside, or compassionately raising from the dead the brother of the griefstricken Martha and Mary. In the heavenly balance, advantages of wealth and pride of family weigh light against honest purpose and holiness of life.

A broad and all-pervading love of God is the great key-note of all nobility, true worth, and happiness in this world. Charity has conceived and brought forth all the grand ideals, all the goodness, all the heroism on the face of the earth. It imparts magnanimity to the character and beauty to the soul, while it gives dignity and worth to the lowliest deed. It constitutes a man a hero in the service of his country, or a saint in the service of God. The following sentence from a spiritual writer expresses very concisely what we seek to convey: "Sanctity is the love of God and man carried to a sublime extravagance." This is a true pen picture of the character of the whole-souled woman we are about to describe, whose life was one long act of love for God and devotion to the welfare of mankind. Hence she belonged to the generation of the righteous, the only lineage by which we shall be known on the great Accounting Day.

Frances was the youngest of a family of five children which blessed the marriage of John Warde and Jane Maher. Mrs. Warde died

#### Rev. Mother M. Xavier Warde

4

shortly after the birth of her little daughter. Thus, this child, destined for great things in the mind of God, was called upon through the tender period of childhood and the confiding years of girlhood to make the sacrifice of a mother's care and a mother's love, — a privation which brings its bitter pangs to the latest day of the longest life.

John Warde was absent from home when his wife died. It is said that on his return he yielded to such excessive grief as to endanger his health. Although he lived for several years afterward, he was never again the same vigorous man that he had been before this great sorrow. Mr. Warde's second son, studying at Maynooth, was taken dangerously ill when near his ordination, and died on the day selected for him to be raised to the holy priesthood.

Helen, a sweet girl in her eighteenth year, her father's favorite, and the flower of this interesting family, died soon after her brother, leaving Mr. Warde a broken-hearted man. To add to his trials, Belbrook House, the pride of his ancestors for many generations, passed into the hands of strangers. It came about in this way: A nobleman, whose estate adjoined that of Mr.

Warde's, coveted the location for a college, which some Englishmen wished to open on this beautiful site. John Warde belonged to that class of Irish gentlemen, sturdy and honorable, who follow their consciences in political matters, come what may.

Heretofore his firmness in adhering to principle had been respected, and no attempt was ever made to meddle with his comfortable incumbency. Now his interests clashed with those of Lord de Vesci, who found in politics a ready pretext to seize on the leases of Belbrook House.

John Warde was a virtuous man, well trained to suffer with Christian fortitude the adverse circumstances of life. How frequently are such circumstances ordained by a wise Providence for the uplifting and purification of human souls! As certain seeds yield their fragrance only when crushed, so noble souls give forth their sweet odor of virtue when bruised by the Hand of God. As the petals of a flower lie warped and confined in the bud until God's rain and sunshine cause them to expand, so many souls keep their best qualities hidden and unknown till God visits them with the chastening influence of adversity, and then, to the surprise and edification of all,

they suddenly blossom forth in splendid examples of heroic virtue.

After these trying events, Mr. Warde found a suitable avocation in Dublin, where he won universal respect as a scholar and a gentleman during the short time which intervened until God called him to his reward. Being invited to dine with the poet Moore and other celebrated friends at Monasterevan, he complied, but shortly after dinner was taken seriously ill with a malady from which he never rallied.

A kind, maternal aunt, who took charge of the household affairs after Mrs. Warde's death, continued her benevolent task until the subject of our sketch had merged into womanhood.

Some of the senior Sisters in "St. Marie's of the Isle" tell us of Mr. Warde as he looked in a "likeness" taken in 1798. They describe him as a tall, well-built man, with fair complexion, and soft blue eyes, the expression on his countenance meek and calm, yet showing a decisiveness about the mouth not to be misunderstood.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> A convent in Cork, founded by Mother McAuley, and placed by her in charge of Mother Josephine, Sarah Warde, when Mother Clare Moore was sent to found a convent in London.

Frances received her education from private tutors, but it was supervised in a great measure by her sister Sarah. Her aunt reserved to herself the responsibility of the child's religious instruction. This estimable lady arranged her methods of teaching Christian Doctrine with the devotional ingenuity of a Fénelon. Many hours did she spend in telling sweet, soul-stirring stories to our little girl seated at her knee. These stories, simple in kind, but full of the eternal truths of religion, awakened an intense love of God in the pure heart of the child, who, "like clay in the hands of the potter," at this tender age was ready to receive impressions which moulded her into the heavenly lines characteristic of her after life.

To this early training we can trace the deep faith, the trustful love, and the holy fear of God which filled the innocent soul of Frances Warde. For knowledge of God begets His love in the soul, and from love is born His holy fear, as Father Faber neatly puts it in his well-known hymn:—

"They love Thee little, if at all, Who do not fear Thee much; If Love is Thy attraction, Lord, Fear is Thy very touch."

Frances took no interest in mathematics or the philosophical branches of study, but showed a decided taste for the finer accomplishments. She delighted in English and literature, grasping each beauty of thought with a quickness of perception far beyond her years. This accounts for her ability to write those delightful letters, teeming with natural vivacity of sentiment and adorned with that charming simplicity of style for which her correspondence was remarkable. Sarah Warde was a high-spirited girl, and her mathematical turn of mind often led her into disagreement with the artistic tastes of Frances. On one occasion we find her placing under lock and key a volume of Milton in which Frances was deeply interested, determined thereby to force her younger sister to use some effort in trying to master a slight intricacy in algebraic equations. Frances, however, was not to be conquered by this ruse. She seized the algebra found on her desk in place of the poems, ran to her sister and expostulated: "I can understand full well that x and y equals x + y; I know, too, that x taken from x + y leaves y; and, sister mine, I can go farther, and multiply x by y to produce xy; but to dive deeper into the results of quantities expressed by letters and signs is time lost for me. Why spend hours reasoning out dry questions in 'Goff' or 'Euclid,' when reading some stanza from my classics pictures clearly in my mind the beautiful and true in all God's works on earth, with delightful glimpses of the infinite loveliness of Heaven?" Sarah was won by the precocity shown in her youthful sister's inferences, and henceforth left her free to follow her favorite tastes in study. Like St. Teresa, Frances early saw the unspeakable beauty of Heaven mirrored in the sublime in nature and art. No wonder, then, that even her childish aspirations soared far beyond the fleeting attractiveness of earth, to the only true and lasting beauty.

The house in which Frances spent the greater portion of her childhood was located near a winding stream between two elevations of ground. The ruins of an ancient castle stood close by, on the edge of the stream, hedged in by shrubbery of, perhaps, many centuries' growth and decay. In a sort of crypt behind the eastern wall, Frances had arranged, when quite young, an altar, with a picture of Our Lord blessing little children for a central figure, and a print

#### 10 Rev. Mother M. Xavier Warde

of Our Blessed Lady and the "Guardian Angel" on either side. When needed, her aunt was never at a loss to find the little girl, and she was never known to disobey or delay when called. Leaving her little shrine, she would appear rosy and beaming at Miss Maher's side, ready to run on any errand for her kind relative. Her brother John was grown almost to manhood before this little sister emerged from babyhood; yet he was her constant companion in his leisure moments, and, on account of her ardent, affectionate disposition, loved her more than all the world beside. Her fondness for fun and amusement, and her bright, lively traits of character, accompanied by a natural horror of anything that seemed wrong, made her the idol of the household. John and Frances oft repaired at sunset hour to her little altar in the castle crypt. Here the grown-up brother would repeat with the child some simple prayer, or select pretty sayings from "St. Teresa," a small and well-worn volume found among her mother's favorite books. As the twilight settled down on hilltop and glen, brother and sister might be seen returning, hand in hand, to the house, the bright little mind of Frances busy pondering over St. Teresa's beautiful portrayals of the sweetness of God's love. Once in the house, the child was soon preparing for bed, for in "ve olden times" the "children's hour" ended with evening's twilight. On rising each morning, and before retiring each evening, we are told she was wont to kneel at her aunt's knee to recite aloud the Lord's Prayer and Hail Mary, the Apostles' Creed and Confiteor, and a simple prayer composed by the worthy Miss Maher for the use of her cherished sister's orphaned child. As nearly as we can remember from hearing it once dictated, the words ran thus: "O my good God, be merciful to my father and mother; Lord, pardon their sins, grant them the light of Heaven. Jesus, Mary, and Joseph watch over me through life, and may I die in your blessed' company. Angel of God, my guardian dear, guide, bless, and protect me. Amen."

Then came a short conference between the child and her aunt pertaining to God and Heaven. It was during these communings that the wonderful light of the Spirit of Holiness first appeared in the pure soul of the little one.

Mother Josephine used to tell a story of Frances, when very young, going to bed with12

out having said some prayers which she was in the habit of saying every evening. During the night she awoke in a terrible fright, and aroused her sister, imploring her to keep awake while she knelt by the bedside and said the forgotten prayers.

The happiness of the pious little Frances knew no bounds when she was told to prepare to receive Our Lord for the first time. She had been carefully instructed, and, although younger than the average age for first communicants, she fully realized the great purity of heart necessary for the worthy reception of the Holy Eucharist. Therefore, such prayerfulness, and such sincere sorrow for the smallest fault as this earnest child evinced, would seem to mark her out, in the designs of God, for some special purpose. She received Confirmation from the celebrated Bishop Doyle, an Irish prelate of great ability, saintly in character, and vigilant and powerful in word and work for the spread of the Kingdom of Christ among men. Long years after the death of this great Bishop, we find Frances Warde establishing the Order of Mercy in the diocese over which, in life, he presided.

Many stories are told of our little candidate

for Confirmation. This one we relate, as told by a dear old gentleman with snow-white hair, and a kind, honest face which always beamed with delight as he spoke of his mother being present in the church when Frances Warde was confirmed. As was the custom, the Bishop examined the class in Christian Doctrine in the presence of the assembled congregation. When he questioned Frances, her answers were so intelligent, so expressive of spiritual depth of understanding far beyond her years, that His Lordship placed the little girl on the sanctuary step before the people gathered in the church, saying, "This child is destined by God for some great work in His service."

Yet, withal, we find in her the frank simplicity of the child, — a trait so captivating in little ones that we would fain wish them always to remain the sweet, guileless enchanters who so warm our hearts, and make us forget that the world ever lost its first innocence in the garden of Paradise. When asked by the Bishop why she took Teresa for her confirmation name, she replied, "Because, my lord, I think it is a very pretty name." She was deeply impressed by her First Holy Communion and the Sacrament of Confirmation.

#### 14 Rev. Mother M. Xavier Warde

From this time we date her earnestness in winning souls to God. Her love of the poor began to manifest itself in the gay little girl who would trip away to the homes of the poor old women and hungry-faced children, well burdened with a store of delicacies which she was wont to coax from her worthy aunt, after her own pretty fashion. Before leaving the cabins, she would gather the children around her, catechise and instruct them on religious truths, and recite to them verses of Scripture and stanzas of sacred song as a reward for a well-learned lesson in their catechism. During all her girlhood years, the merry laugh of Frances could be heard in garden, field, or schoolroom, wherever she happened to be for the time. Her gay disposition dispelled every cloud, and yet, as she grew in years, her relatives noticed a certain pensiveness in her manner, — a marked seriousness in her character which they could not reconcile with her natural fun-loving propensities. Mayhap, already had the Gospel words "Ouid prodest" commenced to whisper in her heart, as a prelude to the aspirations which would fill her soul in the years to come, when the Divine Lover would take her by the hand, and guide her footsteps

from the "beaten track" to the higher and more perfect life.

Many years after the family had left Mountrath, and had taken up their residence in Dublin, Frances, now well advanced to womanhood. began to go into society, where her fascinating personality and superior qualities of heart and mind brought her much notice. She was carried away by her desire to please, and soon the allurements of fashion, with the attendant vanities, held the once guileless, unsuspecting maiden in firmest bonds. Visits, parties, and other amusements were her delight. As it was not in her nature to do anything by halves, she threw her whole energy into these rounds of enjoyment, sparing no pains to excel in the art of pleasing. This sprightly eagerness of disposition added to her attractiveness, and made her the ruling spirit wherever she happened to be. It would be hard to imagine a more charming type of womanhood than the description given of Frances Warde at this period of her life. Tall, well proportioned, with a dignity of bearing that characterized her to her latest day, she could have graced a court, or added dignity to the poorest cottage. expression of her face bespoke the strong ten-

dencies of her character. Her forehead was high and commanding; her eyes were deep set, and of the soft, uncommon shade of blue that seems to reflect the radiant beauty of the soul within. Often did they twinkle with merriment, as she surprised the dejected into a lively sally of wit, or when, with sweet playfulness, she smoothed over some disagreeable occurrence. Those who knew her intimately say her character was a strong combination of candor and common sense, offset with sweetness and firmness. Apart from her genuine sincerity, perhaps, her two most lovable qualities were her delightful simplicity of manner, together with a depth of feeling which she sometimes found it difficult to conceal. With her friends she was true through every vicissitude, her great heart ever ready to make little account of natural defects where sincere good-will was evident.

Any demand on her sympathy was tenderly met with heartfelt kindness. She had the capacity for strong affection, but detested anything like deceit or self-interest. In all that concerned herself she was reserved to a fault, but true devotedness to others was hers by excellence.

At this time the vanities of the world were not

at all distasteful to her; but God, who plans in secret His own designs on souls, was watching over this gifted girl. Events were transpiring, and troubles were arising in her soul, which would bring her to see by the light of faith the Divine Eyes pleading and the Divine Voice calling. With all her fascination for society, Frances never gave up the pious custom of approaching the sacraments regularly. As she turned her eyes upon her innermost soul, she recoiled from the consciousness of her neglect in doing what was required of her in order to please God perfectly. Her firm principles of faith stirred up the old ardor of God's love, and there came into her heart a holy fear that she had offended the true Lover of souls by her coldness toward Him in her moments of infatuation with the world.

If we do not take the time and pains to fathom our inclinations and the depth of their intensity, the soul must suffer, for without reflection we can go on almost unconsciously, forgetting the good God, Who has done all things for us, and Who yearns for our love in return. With Frances Warde the fight was going on within, while the world called her with all the subtleness of its enticements. The usual time of approach-

18

ing the sacraments came about. She stopped to prepare; she reflected. Was she wasting time? Was she giving to pleasure the best part of a life that could be employed in the sphere of duty?

It was after one of these deliberations that she made known to her confessor, Dr. Armstrong, the parish priest of St. Michael's Church, Ann Street, Dublin, her trouble of mind regarding the disposal of her time. In confiding to him the fact that she did as she pleased, spending her days in useless gayety, she disclosed the defective point in her mode of life, which rendered inactive the great wells of goodness in her heart, ready to bubble up and overflow in some worthy cause, at the first bidding. Father Armstrong explained to her the terrible responsibility of wasting the precious time given by God for high and holy pursuits, in a round of idle pleasures which, though trifling, were, nevertheless, offensive to the Great Judge of "every idle word that man shall speak," and for which He shall ask an account on the Day of Judgment.

Touched by these considerations, Frances deeply regretted her ingratitude and insensibility. Humbled and penitent she prayed for grace to see what God wished her to do. Her heart was

as pure as the crystal fountains that sparkle in the glens of her own native Leinster, while anear was the Divine Consoler to help her to overcome her inclination toward the fascinating circles of pleasure and refinement. In giving her a rule for the useful employment of time in doing some particular good, Father Armstrong recommended her to teach a few hours each day in the poor schools which Catherine McAuley had lately opened in Baggot Street. She complied, and in this way became acquainted with Miss Mc-Auley, whom she admired very much. We are told that Catherine became to the young girl as the mother she had never known. A holy friendship grew up between these two gifted women which never waned during the lifetime of either. Frances never tired of teaching in the schools and instructing in the house of Mercy, also established by Catherine McAuley a short time before, for homeless girls.

## Chapter II.

#### EARLY DAYS AT BAGGOT STREET.

THE intense ardor manifested by Frances in her work attracted many other young ladies to join those already inspired with the charitable enterprise. Elizabeth Harley, one of the belles of fashionable society in Dublin, who had been much attached to Frances in their days of pleasure-seeking, now followed her to the feet of the Divine Master, asking that she, too, might be permitted to serve Him in the person of His helpless little ones.

Her father was Captain Harley, a man characterized for his intrepid spirit at the post of duty, but loving and yielding in domestic life. When his daughter made known to him her intention of joining the society of pious ladies at Baggot Street, with the courage of the Spartan mother of old, made perfect by the Divine Love in his heart, which ancient Spartan never knew, he exclaimed: "Go, my darling child, enlist in the

ranks of the King of kings, but be no cowardly soldier of the Crucified One. Enter the thick of the fight for souls, and, if needs be, die, rather than forsake the glorious standard of the Cross." It is easy to imagine that the Sister of Mercy moulded from the child of such a father was no drone in the busy beehive of promoters of God's greater honor and glory.

The schools continued to overflow with children, and, already, the Hand of God was manifest in the pious project of Catherine McAuley. Here we see a band of noble women richly endowed with the capacity of loving their neighbor and of spending themselves in the interests of their fellow beings. They have been raised up by God for a grand task, that of dispensing blessings to the down-trodden and forgotten ones of His creatures made to His own image and likeness, and redeemed by His Precious Blood.

<sup>&</sup>quot;Man is dear to man: the poorest poor,
Long for some moments in a weary life,
When they can know and feel that they have been —
Themselves the fathers and the dealers-out
Of some small blessings: have been kind to such
As needed kindness, for the single cause
That we have, all of us, one human heart."

Behold, how these frail women go forth, with that calm, sweet smile upon their countenances,—a smile born of fervent love and firm trust in the Omnipotent One, Who is the Strength of the weak ones of earth, as well as the Upholder of mighty nations!

Will they accomplish the grand object they have undertaken? We leave that to the pages of future history to prove. The task they are engaged in must be blessed by God, since it is the one work most dear to the merciful Heart of Jesus, Who said: "Suffer little children to come unto Me, for of such is the kingdom of Heaven"; and, to the penitent at His feet: "Much is forgiven thee, because thou hast loved much"; and to the sick and maimed: "Be thou cured" and "made whole."

In May of 1828 the Institute had progressed so rapidly that the Divine impress seemed to rest on it; yet the seeds of all great projects must be watered by tears. It is God's way. His beginnings are always small, hidden from the proud lovers of worldly glory, thriving only beneath the shadow of the Cross. At this time a heavy trial came to Catherine McAuley in the death of her faithful counsellor and staunch friend,

the Very Rev. Father Armstrong. It seemed that, without his support, her plans must come to naught. In his illness he secured the care of His Grace, Archbishop Murray, for the rising Institute; yet, when making known to Catherine that she could rely on the Archbishop for counsel and support, he reminded her of the old injunction he had emphasized to her so often: "Do not put your trust in any human being; place all your confidence in God alone."

Father Armstrong's admonitions did not fall on barren ground. Those who knew the foundress through all the years she was with her newly founded Order, were astounded at her singular purity of intention and firm trust in God, which no temptation to discouragement nor obstacle in carrying out her plans could diminish. These virtues were so strongly engrafted in the characters of those who were her companions at Baggot Street, that their after lives were radiant with uprightness of purpose in their every act, and with sweet, childlike confidence in God amid the darkest trials.

As Catherine McAuley and her associates went among the poor, their first effort was to touch the tender chord of sympathy, alleviating

sorrow and discouragement, poverty and suffering. True, they often found themselves straitened for means; and who, coming in contact with the deserving poor, does not know how painful it is to be unable to do all one would desire to relieve their wants and bring joy to their hearts!

Yet, although we may have little of this world's goods to share with this best loved portion of Christ's flock, we can always speak the compassionate word, give the gentle smile of encouragement, and pray to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the Source of Infinite Goodness, to impart His riches to His own desolate ones. "With Me are riches, that I may enrich them that love Me." Prov. viii. 18, 21. "He became poor for your sake, that through His poverty you might be rich (in grace)." 2 Cor. viii. 9.

On Sept. 24, 1828, the Feast of Our Lady of Mercy, His Grace, Archbishop Murray, gave the Institute permission to adopt this beautiful title, and be placed under the protection of "Our Lady of Mercy." In October of the same year Frances Warde took up her abode permanently at Baggot Street.

She set aside her rich garments and comfort-

able apparel, putting on a black dress of plain material, with the lace cap, something similar to the outfit worn by postulants in the Order at the present time. She was nineteen years of age when she entered on this manner of life. It was a calling devoid, it is true, of extraordinary austerities, yet it demanded much self-denial and solid virtue in the daily observance of Rule, and required devotedness and regularity in the spiritual and active duties enjoined. Frances had made use of the means pointed out by the Church for a step of this kind, namely: time, reflection, prayer, and the consent of a prudent and holy guide. Now she felt safe in accepting the rule of life approved of for the congregation.

On the 30th of November, 1828, the Archbishop gave permission to the Sisters, as they were now called, to visit the sick. Before this time, they confined their visits to cases of poverty or misery of some form, but excluded illness, awaiting the sanction of authority. Catherine McAuley began, at once, to instruct her associates on the words of the Gospel, which Christ, as our Judge, will pronounce on the Last Day. "I was hungry and you gave Me to eat; naked, and you clothed Me; sick and in prison, and you visited Me."

Frances entered upon this new duty with all the enthusiasm of her ardent nature. Each day, two of the fervent little band donned their bonnets and cloaks; took a small, black portmanteau, carried on the arm beneath the folds of the cloak, and, in the name of the community, went forth on their errands of charity. Fully did the first visitors of the sick, in the Order of Mercy, realize that each step taken and each word spoken in the service of His afflicted children is counted by the Heavenly Father, Who watches over even the birds of the air, and the lilies of the field.

Ah! how firmly may we persuade ourselves as we enter the abodes of the poor, that we are oftentimes the companions of a Heavenly visitor, the Recording Angel who inscribes in the Book of Life each beautiful act of resignation and conformity to God's Will, practised by these patient, faithful souls. They may be bound to a bed of pain, and possess few of the comforts of life, yet we see them radiant with a beam of holy peace upon their brow, which the world can never "give or take away." With what confidence these silent sufferers will stand among the blessed on the Day of Judgment, to hear the "well done" of the Mighty and Just Judge, while the

opulent seekers of worldly pleasures will hide their faces with shame!

On the 24th of June, 1829, His Grace, the Archbishop, blessed the new chapel on Baggot Street. The "altar piece," a painting of Our Blessed Lady with the Infant Jesus in her arms, was brought from Rome for that purpose, by the Very Rev. Doctor Blake. Rev. Father Burke, O. S. F., was appointed chaplain by the Archbishop. He celebrated the first Mass offered within its walls, on June 7 (Pentecost Sunday), 1829.

Catherine McAuley had an intense devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus; therefore, we find her establishing the Sodality of the Sacred Heart, in the new chapel, a few days after its dedication, on the Feast of the Sacred Heart of this memorable year. When her Institute was formed into a Religious Congregation, and approved by the Church, she placed in the Rules and Constitutions of the Order the following: "They shall also possess a most tender devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, fount of every grace, and object of our most tender love, and concurring with the most pious wishes of the Holy Catholic Church, they shall raise their

minds and affections to that boundless love which the Divine Redeemer has shown for mankind in the institution of the Blessed Eucharist, and in His dolorous passion and death, suffered for our redemption, and which is daily evinced to us by the treasure of graces, and the immense benefits which flow from this loving and amiable heart. They shall on their part, endeavor to atone for the outrages suffered by Him, for which the malice and ingratitude of mankind make so base a return."

Here we find the revered foundress imbued with a devotion like unto an Alacoque or a Colombiere. Through her spiritual daughters she has spread this beautiful devotion over the whole world, for in every land where a Convent of Mercy raises its cross-crowned roof to the blue sky of Heaven, within its walls, and in that vicinity, is the Sacred Heart of Jesus "adored, praised, and loved."

If we are to measure success by the expression of popular sentiment, the year 1830 opened with a gloomy outlook for the new Institute. Many objected to the project, and some went so far as to express their objection to His Grace, the Archbishop, representing the association as

uncalled for, and a hindrance to other pious establishments. These arguments were framed so adroitly and expressed with such apparent sincerity, that for the time being, the Archbishop was really somewhat perplexed. Catherine McAuley knew all this, but she spoke no word of defence. Silently, she recommended her cause to God, leaving everything in His All-Powerful Hands, while she pondered deeply in her heart, with loving confidence, her favorite maxim: "And Jesus was silent."

The Archbishop and Doctor Blake were anxious to do whatever would prove most conducive to the greater honor and glory of God, yet they hesitated regarding the advisability of encouraging the Institution of Our Lady of Mercy.

Thus it sometimes happens that God permits the envious to carry out their plans, but He ever brings good out of evil in His own time and way. In this instance He had permitted the complaints and misrepresentations already alluded to, but caused them to contribute in the end to the more perfect and permanent establishment of the Order of Mercy. After earnest prayer for light, and deliberate consideration of the future good to come to the Church

from the congregation, the Archbishop and Doctor Blake, with the willing consent of Catherine McAuley and her associates, decided that the members of this pious household should become religious, bound by vows and Rules. The different convents were resorted to for copies of their Rules, and all responded with the most cordial kindness. The Carmelites and Poor Clares, especially, showed every mark of sincere interest, even offering to affiliate the community, if the foundress so desired. Mother McAuley did take advantage of this kind proposal some years afterwards, when she had the Order of Mercy so affiliated to the Carmelite Order, as to enable the Sisters to receive many of the indulgences attached to that Order.

Later the Carmelite Fathers became the Chaplains and Confessors at Baggot Street. Until the death of Mother McAuley, when the Archbishop gave permission for a cemetery in the grounds of the Convent, all the departed Sisters were laid to rest in the vault of the Carmelite Church. From this, we readily understand the warm, filial feeling the Sisters of Mercy entertain for the grand, old "Mother Order" of Religious. Here, too, during its infancy, the

Order of Mercy imbibed from its intercourse with the clients of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, the contemplative spirit of the seraphic St. Teresa, which spiritualizes and sanctifies the active workings of the Institute. Mother McAuley chose the Presentation Rule as best adapted to the duties of the rising Order, later this rule revised and modified by the foundress, was authorized and approved by the Holy See.

On the 8th of September, 1830, Catherine McAuley went to the Presentation Convent at George's Hill to commence her novitiate. Sister Anna Maria Doyle and Sister Elizabeth Harley accompanied her. During the absence of the foundress, Frances Warde, by her bright, hopeful spirit in the house, and indefatigable labors among the poor, kept all the arrangements and duties of the Institute in a satisfactory condition. With her, the pious band of workers, courageous and cheerful, were looking forward to the happy day in the near future when they would enter the religious state of life as the first Sisterhood of the Congregation.

Through every vicissitude of her long and useful life, assisted by the grace of God, Frances Warde's vivacity of temperament and earnest

zeal gave a strength to her soul that proved superior to all obstacles, interior or exterior. She ever showed herself the "valiant woman" as trying circumstances called forth her talent for coping quietly with every emergency.

Catherine McAuley and her companions were warmly welcomed by the Presentation nuns. The kind Abbess provided generously for their thorough training in the principles of the religious life. On the 9th of December, three months after their entrance, the three postulants were clothed with the religious habit. obtained permission from the Mother Abbess to retain their baptismal names with "Mary" prefixed. The Mistress of Novices spared no humiliation on Catherine, hence she was well grounded in humility and self-abnegation. Her spirit of interior mortification was so real, that her biographer declares she took every reprimand and penance with a greater joyfulness than that with which worldlings receive honors, because, as she herself loved to repeat: "The gate of Heaven is low, and there is never any danger of stooping too much."

Catherine McAuley and Frances Warde, though so closely allied in a grand enterprise

for God's greater glory, were of opposite temperaments. The foundress was naturally gifted with sweetness, evenness of temper, and those qualities of heart and mind which we look for in one trained in the school of St. Francis de Sales. Frances, by nature, was ardent, impetuous, affectionate, full of that fire of spirit which writers ascribe to St. Ignatius or St. Francis Xavier. Only by dint of constant self-annihilation and persevering prayer, did she become the subdued, foresighted, patient religious, whom all love to remember in her later days, as a model of the gentler virtues. One great gift both possessed in common, and with an intensity seldom equalled, — a burning love of God and a broad, magnanimous love of the neighbor.

In June of 1831, while the foundress was making her novitiate with the Presentation nuns, Sister Caroline Murphy was taken ill at Baggot Street, and soon passed beyond hope of recovery. She died a holy death on June 28, and was buried in the habit of the Third Order of Carmelites, in the vault of the Carmelite Church on Clarendon Street, Dublin.

The number was small for the fulfilment of the many duties, causing Frances to redouble

her energy in performing all the labor she could, in order that the strength of the more delicate members could be economized. In spite of her precaution, sickness again crossed their path, and before any one realized the seriousness of the case, Sister Ann O'Grady's illness was pronounced fatal. She lingered only six months, before going to meet the reward of her fervent desire to spend herself in relieving and instructing God's little ones. She, too, was laid to rest in the Carmelite Church, before the foundress returned to Baggot Street. A few days after the burial of Sister Ann O'Grady, Sister Mary Teresa McAuley, a niece of Mother McAuley, became another victim of unrestrained zeal. Following the dictates of her youthful ardor, she had over-taxed her strength in the performance of some duty and burst a blood-vessel. Frances Warde and this innocent soul were staunch friends, from their constant companionship and mutual exchange of zealous sympathy in the relief of the poor and sick. Now, Frances was bowed down with grief, yet rising above her natural feelings, she gave no manifestation of sadness. Summoning all her courage, she placed her hope in the Heavenly Comforter,

Who has said, "Call upon Me in the day of trouble, and I will comfort you."

She cheered on her devoted Mary Teresa to make one grand act of resignation, and become an apostle of suffering, since the good God willed this peculiar service for her who, hitherto, had been such an apostle of works. "The cross makes fertile whatever it touches, and Heaven accepts no fruits but such as the cross has hallowed." Mary Teresa McAuley suffered on until November, 1833, when she was professed on her death bed. She made the third of the "Community in Heaven" laid to rest beneath the vaulted edifice of Mount Carmel.

When Catherine McAuley and her companions had completed the shortest term of novitiate required by the Sacred Canons before pronouncing religious vows, the final chapter was called in the Presentation Convent, to deliberate and weigh well before God the matter of Holy Profession for the three candidates. After the usual recommendation of this important step, to the Holy Spirit, the chapter decided that the three novices should go into immediate retreat as a final preparation for the taking of vows.

At the end of an eight days' retreat Sisters Mary Catherine, Mary Ann, and Mary Elizabeth made their Profession, with the proviso that the rule of life they would henceforth follow would be in accordance with the performance of the duties of a Sister of Mercy. The ceremony took place on Dec. 12, 1831, in the chapel at George's Hill.

Before these events had taken place, the Archbishop had received full power from the Holy See to establish Sisters of Mercy as a religious body of women among the Orders which, like various and beautiful gardens, adorn the Church of God.

After their profession, our trinity of religious hastened home to Baggot Street. We can imagine the joy of Frances Warde, the frail little Mary Teresa, and the others to have once more in their midst the great, motherly heart of Catherine McAuley. Tradition has kept alive the joy of that day, for in every Convent of Mercy throughout the world there is general recreation on the 12th of December, accompanied by a holy joyousness of spirit which even the pleasure-seekers of the world might envy.



Rev. Mother Mary Catherine McAuley.



The day after their return His Grace, Archbishop Murray, canonically appointed Sister Mary Catherine the Mother Superior of the new Order. She desired to be addressed as "Sister Superior," but the Archbishop confirmed the title "Reverend Mother" as the most fitting for the designation of the Superior, since her offices in behalf of her subjects are similar to those of a mother toward her family. The first lecture our foundress gave to her little community was from Rodriguez, on St. Paul's words, "Obey your prelates and be subject to them, for they watch continually as being to render an account of your souls; that they may do this with joy and not with grief." Heb. xiii. 17.

In arranging the Distribution of Time, the foundress provided for only one hour of recreation, to be taken in the evening. The Archbishop considered a short recreation after dinner necessary for the unbending of the minds of the Sisters so constantly employed in either prayer or active employment. His wishes were complied with and the horarium approved. Reverend Mother spared no pains in impressing on the Sisters the importance of cultivating a spirit

of prayer, charity, self-forgetfulness, modesty, humility, silence, obedience, cheerfulness, simplicity, and prudence.

On Jan. 23, 1832, Frances Warde, with six other postulants, presented herself for the habit of religion. The name Mary Francis Xavier was given her at this ceremony. Her choice of a patron would seem providential, for as St. Francis Xavier was associated with St. Ignatius, the founder of the Society of Jesus, so she was associated with Catherine McAuley, the foundress of the Sisters of Mercy. As he turned away from home and friends, from honors and fame, from the land of his birth and his heart's affections, to carry the light of the Gospel to heathen lands, so she, with sorrowing heart yet joyful soul, bade farewell to her dear native Erin to spread Christian education in the then great missionary country of America. And, when she met with difficulties and hardships in her missionary career, the same zeal and love for God burning in her breast as in that of her patron saint, never permitted any contact with coldness or indifference to lessen the warmth of her first fervor. As St. Francis Xavier revered St. Ignatius, writing to him on his

knees as an exterior mark of his inward veneration, so did Mother Xavier Warde love and respect the foundress from whom neither distance nor time ever subtracted one iota of the love of her great heart.

# Chapter III.

CHOLERA OF 1832. ESTABLISHING THE INSTITUTE IN CARLOW.

BOUT four months after Sister Mary Elizabeth Harley had pronounced her vows in the Presentation Convent she passed to her eternal home. She was a devoted champion of the poor, and valued highly the happiness of being able to serve Jesus Christ in the person of the needy. But her constitution was delicate and vielded readily to the effects of over-exertion in ministering to the wants of those who needed the merciful sympathy and kind ministrations of a fellow-creature. She had been somewhat delicate at George's Hill; but full of energy, and possessing a strong, selfdenying disposition, she did not appear so ill as to make her condition seem serious until two days before her death. She died on April 25, 1832, with the holy names of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph sweetly hovering on her lips.

We have no record of her father's feelings as he beheld the idolized child he had consecrated to God pass from earth to heaven in her youth and innocence. We can, however, rest assured that one who displayed such fortitude in surrendering his child to be a chosen spouse of God, was also possessed of a nobility of soul which would permit no tie of affection to thwart or diminish his entire conformity with the Divine Will. He saw his loved one depart with the grace of holy Profession fresh on her soul; he saw her go to follow the Lamb in the eternal mansions, where sorrow or sin cannot enter and where the blessed praise God forever.

No doubt the sorrows of separation rushed in upon his heart with a mighty surge; but through all we can picture his eyes raised to Heaven, comforted by the sorrowing Mother who stood beneath the Cross for three long hours, gazing on the outstretched form of her Divine and dying Son.

"Like the voiceless starlight falling, Through the darkness of the night, Like the silent dew-drops forming In the cold moon's cloudless light, So there comes to hearts in sorrow, Mary's angels, dear and bright.

Like the scents of countless blossoms That are trembling in the air; Like the breaths of gums that perfume Sandy deserts, bleak and bare, Are Our Lady's ceaseless answers To Affliction's lowly prayer. They are presences and foretastes Of some nameless, heavenly things, From the golden throne of Mary, Wafted down to us on wings: Yet they come to none but mourners, To the hearts that sorrow wrings. They are wondrous thoughts of Jesus; They are presences of God, Giving zest to weary sadness, Or strange sweetness to the rod, Filling full of heavenly sunbeams, Sorrow's dark and lone abode — For they come into our spirits With a soft and winning might, And they make our Dead look brighter, In the waking hours of night, And they gently turn our darkness Into depths of tenderest light. Oh, it is as if some fragments Of the golden calms of Heaven By the Mercy of Our Father, Into Mary's hands were given, But to earth were only falling Upon hearts with sorrow riven. For in Mary's ear, all sorrow Singeth ever like a Psalm; Welcome, Mother, are the tempests Which thou layest, with thy calm; Sweet the broken hearts thou healest, With thine own heart's nameless balm."

Sister M. Elizabeth Harley's death was deeply felt by Sister M. Francis Xavier, who, under God, was the means of attracting her to the religious life, and who was deeply attached to her on account of her highly-gifted mind and strong, religious character. Rev. Mother Mc-Auley felt her loss not less sensibly than did Sister Xavier: but a calm control of their feelings had long been cultivated and acquired by both of these valiant women. Therefore, repressing all outward marks of sorrow, they raised their hearts to God, and while fervently praying for her soul, they repeated aloud that portion of the Easter Office (it was the Easter time): "This is the day which the Lord hath made; let us be glad, and rejoice therein."

The cholera of 1832 will be long remembered in Ireland. So panic-stricken were the people over its approach that many actually died of fear. His Grace, the Archbishop, and the Board of Health made frequent requests to have the Sisters attend the afflicted populace. Reverend Mother did not hesitate, but came immediately to the rescue by taking charge of the Cholera Hospital. The presence of the Sisters had a comforting effect on the poor patients. They

trusted these gentle nurses, and would accept from their hands any remedy offered. The Sisters, on their part, while applying to the body the necessary remedies, did not forget the kind word of consolation, nor fail to remind those whom they visited of the duty to reflect, and prepare their souls for the sentence of death, if decreed by the Eternal Judge. The Sisters ministered faithfully to every victim of this dread disease until the pestilence had quite disappeared from Dublin, and in all their ministrations, though hundreds died around them, not one of the religious died from its effects. We will quote here an extract from Dean Gaffney's Memoir of the Foundress: "There, in the very sanctuary of the disease, what desperate devotedness would venture! Even there was the Sister of Mercy; and not only to enter, but to take up her abode entirely for months; and, true to the example of Him who laid down His life for others, she gave herself a willing victim upon the altar of charity. So great was the devotedness of these religious, that one of them contracted an infirmity under which she labored many months, and of which she was healed with difficulty. A zeal so intense, and a charity so devoted, were worthy of reward even in this world. While hundreds were dying around them, they seemed to bear a charmed life. Not one Sister of Mercy fell a victim to the malady."

But Dublin saw not the worst ravages of the cholera. In the country places of the south and west of Ireland, where there was no hand of religious near to soothe or offer relief, whole families might be seen dying in rude hovels or by the roadside, from sickness and want. After the plague had subsided and famine set in, scenes even more heart-rending were of frequent occurrence. A dead mother with a living babe at her bosom; mothers dying of hunger, giving the last crumb to their starving children; strong men stricken down with starvation, — were common spectacles of horror throughout many of the southern and western counties.

After the cholera had disappeared from Dublin came the epoch of real misery. During this time the Sisters used every exertion to afford all the relief in their power to the destitute. Reverend Mother's generosity in providing funds for this work of charity knew no bounds; consequently the time came when she opened a scanty purse. Then her genius invented plans for pro-

curing necessary means to continue this great work. These plans were blessed most bountifully by the Giver of all good gifts.

On one occasion we read of her organizing A Fancy Sale, for the benefit of the cholera and famine victims. In procuring articles she betook herself to engaging the sympathies of royalty in her project. One of her well-known, beautiful letters was addressed to the Duchess of Kent, asking for some of her own and the Princess Victoria's handiwork, to be disposed of at the sale. She received a quick reply, with every mark of gracious kindness, and soon afterwards she was forwarded a large supply of fancy work made by the Duchess and her daughter, England's future queen.

An enormous sum paid for these articles by a wealthy citizen of Dublin, enabled our revered foundress to provide relief for the homeless and destitute, through her zealous nuns, who sought out woe in every form, and comforted the comfortless among these sorely afflicted human beings.

Sister M. Francis Xavier Warde was the first to pronounce the vows of Religion in Baggot Street Convent, when she and three other novices Establishing the Institute in Carlow 47 consecrated themselves to God on the 24th of January, 1833. This date marks the first ceremony of Religious Profession in the Order of Mercy.

The Book of Ceremonies used for Religious Reception and Profession was compiled by our foundress for this occasion. We are told that Archbishop Murray, who presided at the ceremony, followed the form as laid down by the foundress, and sanctioned it for future use in the Order.

Sister M. Xavier Warde and her companions seemed "drawn from earth" during these solemn moments, so rapt were they in the Divine Presence of Him Who henceforth was to be the only object of their love.

A chronicler of this event says, "The four fervent novices pronounced the holy vows which bound them for life to poverty, chastity, and obedience, in a manner that evinced their lively gratitude to God for so sublime a vocation. Their love seemed to emulate that of the saints, who, from the exercise of the same virtues, and the practice of similar self-sacrifice on earth, are now enjoying their Father's smile in Heaven."

In May, 1835, the solemn approbation of the

Holy See in a formal document was granted to the newly founded Order, accompanied by the Apostolic benediction.

On July 5, 1841, the Rules and Constitutions were confirmed by His Holiness, Pope Gregory XVI.

The successor of the eminent Bishop Doyle in the united Sees of Kildare and Leighlin was the Rev. Edward Nolan, - "a priest of rarest humility and virtue, whose strong, natural talents were developed by careful cultivation and experience." In taking charge of his important diocese, his first care was to provide education for the poor and middle classes. This education, he was convinced, should be received under the influence of religious teachers if civilization, religion, and refinement would once more be the proud boast of Irish hearths and homes. For some time the good Bishop pondered within himself as to the best means of bringing about his favorite project. He finally saw that the Sisters of Mercy would, in an almost providential manner, meet the wants of these people. He interviewed Mother McAuley on the possibility of a foundation, but the means of support were not yet in view. Michael Nowlan, a thrifty laborer

#### Establishing the Institute in Carlow

in Carlow, had accumulated the capital wherewith he "set up" a delft-ware store, and by his economy and business ability made for himself quite a fortune. In spiritual as in temporal affairs, Mr. Nowlan was practical and foreseeing. Therefore he made up his mind to get the greatest good out of his wealth, by having it used for the benefit of humanity, feeling assured that he himself would get his recompense, full measure, and running over, from Him Who said that even a cup of cold water given in His name would not lose its reward. Before his death he sent for Bishop Nolan, explained how he made his fortune, and the manner in which he intended to dispose of it. Then he bequeathed to the Bishop a sum of money (which in United States currency would amount to thirty-five thousand dollars) to be used, as His Lordship saw fit, in educating the poor and increasing good works in Carlow. This legacy, left in 1836, seemed a God-sent gift to the zealous prelate, enabling him to put in execution the great desire of his heart.

Accordingly, a short time after his benefactor's death, we find the good Bishop at the Mother House in Dublin, conferring with the foundress

for the purpose of procuring Sisters to do God's work in Carlow. "Give me," he said, "a small band of your fervent nuns, and I will take upon myself the whole responsibility of their maintenance. The house prepared is not exactly what we would wish, but we will soon build another. The interest of Michael Nowlan's money given them in perpetuity will enable them to commence, at once, their labors amongst the sick and poor. I am not rich, but I promise that my religious communities will never want for necessaries. As a small donation, and as a proof of my affection, I will give them the convent and grounds, and every year, while I live, I will give them one hundred pounds which, if they do not need themselves, they can bestow on the deserving poor. This little gift, however, is to be a secret, for, if known, it might prevent the benefactions of others."

Mother McAuley had drained the numbers of her community for the foundations at Tullamore and Charleville. Therefore, in selecting for Carlow, she found she must sacrifice the pillars of the Sisterhood at home, — her dearest and oldest children. Sister Veronica Corrigan, a lay sister of great piety, was proposed for the

As the time drew near to decide on the separation from this faithful soul, Reverend Mother almost shrank from the painful ordeal of sending her away from the Mother House. But before the arrangements were announced Sister Veronica was seized with typhus fever, and died after a few days' sickness. As Mother McAuley knelt beside the death-bed of this beautiful soul going forth to meet her Heavenly Bridegroom, she reproached herself bitterly for making a reserve, even in thought, about sending her to Carlow. Then and there she made a resolution never again to hesitate in sending whomsoever among her subjects she thought best suited to advance God's work in the place under consideration.

This resolution she put into execution when she chose for Superior of Carlow, Sister M. Xavier Warde, her secretary for many years, and Mother Assistant since Sister Marianne's appointment to Tullamore. This selection entailed great inconvenience to the Parent House at Baggot Street, which had felt for years the valuable assistance of Sister M. Xavier in the business-matters of the community. Yet we see both these noble women consulting only the stern call of duty, giving, without stint, to God, at the sacrifice of their own feelings, all that was needed to carry on His work.

In speaking of this separation, nigh on to half a century afterward, Mother Warde would press back the tears that welled up from her great, warm heart, as, with moist eyes, she would say in her own soft, impressive tones, "I do not know how I survived the parting from Reverend Mother." From their first meeting the ardent, affectionate Frances Warde looked up to Mother McAulev as the ideal religious woman; and Mother McAuley was equally drawn to the charming young girl so much in earnest about doing God's blessed Will in the humble service of His poor. We cannot wonder if, later on in the establishment of the Order, we find the foundress placing implicit trust in the virtue and executive ability of Sister M. Xavier, so strong in character, and so discreet and pious in the ordering of her every act.

On April 10, 1837, Mother McAuley, Mother

M. Xavier Warde, and four other sisters set out on their journey to Carlow. With its cloistered occupants inside, Purcell's mail-coach, chartered for the occasion, moved along at a dignified pace over the spacious roads, through the counties of Dublin, Kildare, and Queen's, until it approached the city of Carlow. Far outside the city walls Bishop, clergy, and laity were assembled to bid them welcome. The party proceeded to the Cathedral, where the "Te Deum" was sung. Then they retired to Carlow College. The President awaited them at the college gates, and conducted them to the brilliantly-lighted reception-hall, decked in gala-day attire, where they were received amid the clappings and cheers of the theological students.

These attentions were most embarrassing to the religious, but thoroughly appreciated by them as a mark of good-will toward the Order of Mercy. As soon as the Sisters could courteously withdraw, Reverend Mother first thanked the Bishop and President of the College for their gracious kindness, and then gladly went to the Presentation Convent, where the nuns had invited them to remain until settled in their new home, to which they repaired that very evening.

#### 54 Rev. Mother M. Xavier Warde

A temporary altar was fitted up before bedtime, and the Bishop celebrated the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass the next morning to obtain God's blessing on this new undertaking. The house was blessed and placed under the care of St. Leo before His Lordship withdrew. The Carlow foundation proved a great comfort to the foundress. Nothing was left undone by Bishop, clergy, or people to support and advance this new educational enterprise. A school was opened at St. Leo's which corresponded in part with our Day Academies. The children of many respectable parents, refined by nature, but poor in this world's goods, found sufficient means to pay the fee required. The consequence was that the school received large numbers of intelligent young pupils. In after years St. Leo's became a veritable flower-bed of religious vocations. Six months after the foundation of the Sisters of Mercy in Carlow, Bishop Nolan became dangerously ill with fever. He was reverently nursed by Mother M. Xavier Warde and her community. His death was as beautiful in its holiness as his life had been eminent in the practice of every virtue. In chronicling his death, the following paragraph appeared in a local print,

which gives, in a few words, the character of this great prelate: "He did the whole of his duty as a ruler in the Church of God, and did it well; but he would rather have his noble head shrouded in a cowl than graced by a mitre."

Mother McAuley used to say that this saintly Bishop brought Our Divine Lord forcibly to her mind, so meek was he, so charitable, so possessed of dignity and grace in his appearance; while the heavenly spirituality which was evident in his countenance, inspired respect and affection in spite of his natural timidity of character. He was a firm support to the Sisters of Mercy in Carlow, and when he died their sorrow was intense, but accompanied by humble resignation to the Divine decrees of God, "Who gives and takes" as He sees best. The foundress in writing to a Sister at Carlow on this occasion says, in referring to Mother M. Xavier Warde's sorrow for the loss of such a kind friend and holy counsellor: "The sorrow in which she so deeply shares is extensively divided, and is equally the affliction of many. The Presentation Nuns, who were so long his spiritual children, had not, I suppose, the comfort of seeing him. And his priests and people; what must they feel!"

#### 56 Rev. Mother M. Xavier Warde

Rev. Francis Haley succeeded Bishop Nolan, and became a firm supporter of the good works already well established by his predecessor.

Mother M. Xavier Warde had much to occupy her attention in overseeing the plans and building of a new convent in Carlow, in 1838, — the first one built outside Dublin. At the time of its erection it was considered the finest convent structure in Ireland, as was the Carlow Cathedral considered the best specimen of architectural beauty throughout the four provinces. It was also considered a great triumph of faith by the many who recalled when the holy Sacrifice of the Mass was offered in a lowly cabin, hillside cave, or hidden glen within the very precincts of Queen's county. Sydney Smith describes it thus: "On an Irish Sabbath the bell of a neat parish church (Episcopal) often summons to service only the parson and an occasional conforming clerk, while two hundred yards away a thousand Catholics are huddled together in a miserable hovel, and pelted by all the storms of Heaven."

At the present time beautiful Catholic Churches and Chapels dot the country from the Giant's Causeway to the mouth of the Shannon, and Establishing the Institute in Carlow

from Galway Bay to the mouth of the Liffey. Yet Carlow Cathedral remains the pride of the people in that vicinity, being hallowed in their hearts by holy traditions, because it is the work of the saintly Bishop Doyle. The same is true of the Convent of the Sisters of Mercy in Carlow. Its corridors and rooms were sanctified in the affections of the nuns by the steps of our venerated foundress. And as the author of the Annals says: "In its sweet old-fashioned garden are the soaring poplars and glossy evergreens which she loved, the mound crowned with roses which gave her such unfeigned delight, the splendid stock gilly-flowers in flaunting colors which brightened the whole, and the trim walks which she paced with her darling Frances Warde and the cherished children of her first flock." Mother M. Xavier Warde was the one who planned the walks, the mounds, and the flower-beds of the beautiful convent garden at Carlow. The "soaring poplars" and picturesque arbor shades were cultivated beneath her well-trained eye, as every nook and corner of greensward and flower-patch were arranged under her tasteful care while she was Superior of the Carlow foundation.

This Convent seemed blessed by God from

the start, and flourished from both a spiritual and temporal point of view. It could be truly said, "The finger of God is here," for the blessing of God was visible in all its orderings.

An extract from Mother McAuley's letter to Mother Xavier Warde on her return to Dublin from Carlow, in 1840, shows the satisfaction afforded her in witnessing the thriving condition of this flower of her foundations. "The first prayer I offered on my arrival was to return the most grateful thanks to God for the sweet, heavenly consolation I received in my visit to Carlow, and to implore His blessing and gracious protection for those who have been so instrumental in bringing that branch to its present flourishing, happy state."

"I worship Thee, sweet will of God! And all Thy ways adore,
And every day I live, I seem
To Love Thee more and more.
I Love to see Thee bring to nought
The plans of wily men;
When simple hearts outwit the wise,
O! Thou art loveliest then.
He always wins who sides with God,
To him no chance is lost;
God's will is sweetest to him when
It triumphs at his cost."

# Chapter IV.

FOUNDATIONS FROM CARLOW. DEATH OF THE FOUNDRESS.

NAAS is a thriving little town in Kildare, nestling so closely to the River Liffey that the crystal waters seem almost to caress the fragrant hedge-rows and trim cottages of this typical, old-fashioned Irish town. Through the surrounding country these same waters ripple on and on, glistening in the sunshine, while they reflect in shade and shadow the ancient ruins of castle and round-tower, as they meander in their beautiful course to the sea.

At the period of which we are writing, one prevailing fact seemed to lessen the charm with which Nature had endowed this delightful town. Religious intolerance had commenced here long before the days of the Emancipation movement, and the traces of its stunting effects remained long after the tearful signature of George IV.

had turned gray on the famous Act wrung from the iron grasp of British power by the eloquence and unflinching persistency of Daniel O'Connell. In 1814 Father Gerald Doyle was appointed pastor of Naas. Many are the stories told of the fierce encounters he and his three curates were wont to experience with the bigotry which beset them at every turn in the discharge of their duties.

In 1838 the population comprised 3,964 Catholics and 347 non-Catholics; yet the latter were at the head of schools, barracks, and prison, exercising a system of proselytism which our separated brethren of the present day would condemn as unbecoming and unchristian. On Sundays the pupils of the military schools, comprising an overpowering majority of Catholics, were obliged to attend the "Church of England" services in a body with their non-Catholic teachers, and listen to the denial of the essential truths of their holy religion, whilst they were forced to submit to the outward ceremony of a form of worship which to them was utterly at variance with that of the One True Church founded by Christ.

These young Catholics were compelled by

dire necessity to take the full course of military training, despite their unsatisfied consciences, for upon their proficiency in military tactics depended their hopes of a competent livelihood in future years. They were not to be daunted in the least by persuasion or threats, but turned to their pastor to obtain redress for their religious grievances. He, like the faithful priest to be met with in every land, felt as a personal injury, every wrong inflicted on the members of his carefully-tended flock. Hence we find him and his curates remonstrating with military and municipal authorities and, as far as their priestly dignity would permit, contending for the justice their people had a right to expect.

So intolerable were the religious annoyances of Naas, during the lifetime of the zealous and vigilant Bishop Doyle, that he declared he would seek open redress for his clergy and people, if further molested by inspectors or military officials.

In passing through this litle town on one occasion, Mother McAuley had a short delay, long enough, however, to appreciate fully the sad need of religious to teach the young girls among the poor, whose virtue needed more than ordinary safe-guards, on account of the location of barracks and military schools in that vicinity.

When Father Gerald Doyle applied to Bishop Haley, for Sisters of Mercy to establish themselves in Naas, it was a request that met with the heartiest approval. The Bishop, at once, referred Father Doyle to the foundress in Dublin, and to Mother Xavier Warde in Carlow. Arrangements were speedily planned that the foundation should be sent out from Carlow. Reverend Mother was overjoyed at the prospect of the Sisters entering a field where their presence was so sorely needed. We find her writing to Mother M. Xavier, thus: "I cannot describe the joy your letter relative to Naas gives me. I fear I am in danger of getting a little jealous. Poor Baggot Street is outdone. In separating with the Sisters for Naas, you have a trial to go through. Remember the venerated Doctor Nolan's words: 'It is my lot.' To reflect that it is the 'lot' or portion God has marked out for us, will be sufficient to cheer us on in every emergency. In the faithful performance of every part of our 'lot,' our sanctification consists.

"There is reason to believe you have been an

obedient child, since to the obedient victory is given. May God continue His blessings to you, and render you every day more deserving of them."

Mother M. Xavier Warde founded the Convent of Mercy in Naas on the feast of Our Lady of Mercy, Sept. 24, 1839. She remained with the foundation in this ancient seat of the kings of Leinster until the works of Mercy were well organized.

Bigotry soon gave way, and before the end of this first year, the Sisters' Schools were attended by several hundred pupils; while among the sick poor, the comfort given, and the aid afforded by the tender ministrations of the nuns, will only be known at the Judgment Seat of God.

All this success of the Sisterhood in Naas was piously attributed by our beloved Mother Warde to the Bountiful Hand of God, and she felt it was sent as a direct blessing to reward Father Doyle and his devoted curates, — patient toilers "against the stream" for so many, many years. Now, in the evening of their lives, they saw all their efforts bearing fruit, and Father Gerald Doyle, that faithful man of God "who

#### 64 Rev. Mother M. Xavier Warde

had borne the burden and the heat of the day" in this portion of His Master's vineyard, could look out with joy, from the watch-tower of his own great heart, at the accomplishment of his life-long desire, and utter his "Nunc dimittis."

Mother M. Xavier took an especial care never to bring herself or her duties into notice in the community. In all her communications with Mother McAuley and her ecclesiastical superiors, about her many foundations, we find no words but the simple, humble lines of a subordinate to those who represent the Will of God in her regard.

She was intensely a woman of "one idea," but that idea comprised the whole scope of the extension of God's kingdom in the hearts of men.

Sister M. Josephine Trenor was left in charge of the flourishing little Naas community, and we read in the early accounts of the house, that the Sisters at Naas never suffered from the ordinary loneliness of those who go on new foundations. This was owing, in a great measure, to the inspiration and impetus given to the good work by Mother M. Xavier's spirit of courage and self-sacrifice. She knew not how

to count the cost in her works of zeal, and until her latest day, her love of the poor, and her great desire of winning souls to God, were contagious in the communities over which she presided. Another reason why the distemper of home-sickness never showed itself in Naas, was because this town was a stopping-place between Carlow and Dublin, which gave the Naas Sisters the hope of seeing Mother Warde and Mother McAuley at regular intervals. But the day came to them, as it does to us all, when their cherished supports were taken away, and their Divine Spouse alone remained.

For nearly twenty years, His Lordship, Doctor Keating, had been Bishop of Ferns,<sup>1</sup> when, in 1839, he applied for Sisters of Mercy to establish free schools in the city of Wexford.

Mother McAuley knew the spiritual needs of the children and grandchildren of those brave men who fell, unconquered, in the massacres of "'98." Therefore it was the delight of her heart to be able to send her religious, as "angels of mercy," to educate the youth, and cheer and comfort the poor and sick among the near de-

<sup>1</sup> A diocese including the county of Wexford and part of Wicklow.

land.

The charge of founding this house was given to Mother M. Xavier Warde, who with six sisters left Carlow early in December, 1840. The house was opened on the 8th of December, the feast of the Immaculate Conception. The first convent was a miserable dwelling which in its poverty was often truly compared to the *stable* at Bethlehem.

God's seal is set on poor beginnings, and Wexford was no exception. The Sisters are adjured in their Rules and Constitutions "to cherish holy poverty as a mother" — Blessed Poverty, which Saint Francis of Assissi was wont to personify and call by the most affectionate titles! If accompanied by solid virtue, it ever brings God's blessing in its train.

Mother Warde inspired the Sisters with her wonderful spirit of poverty, so manifest throughout all her religious life. They adopted her gayety and courage in making the best of those inconveniences which always accompany poverty, and afford such favorable opportunities of putting its spirit in practice.

Frequently during their first days in Wexford,

did Mother Warde give to the Sisters those soulstirring instructions, for which she was so remarkable, on her oft-quoted beatitude: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven." "How little," she would say, "it takes to make God's poor happy, and how grateful they are for the smallest and most ordinary comforts of life, while we chafe under hardships and sacrifices, as if with the Sovereign Lover of the Poor for our Spouse, we could desire aught that would gratify our fastidiousness!" Long after she had left her own native Erin, and "set sail for the land of the West," did her Wexford community recall those happy days of privations and blessings, and the practical exhortations that flowed from Reverend Mother's lips, coming direct from the heart with a force and an unction that could not but leave a lasting impression on all who heard them.

Christmas was very near when the foundation was made, and almost at once the Sisters commenced their usual preparations for making the joyful Yule-tide cheerful and happy for the needy and afflicted. Surely the angels, who sang their "Gloria" to the poor shepherds tending their flocks on the plains of Judea, on that

first Christmas night so long ago, must have hovered near the humble abode which sheltered the Sisters on their first Christmas in Wexford. And how joyfully must their harmonious strain of "Peace on earth to men of good-will" have resounded throughout the heavenly courts, as Christ's poor passed out from the convent doors with a plenteous Christmas dinner for dear ones sitting hungry by their cabin fires!

Mother Warde, during her whole life, kept up this pious practice of providing comfort and cheer for the worthy poor at Christmas. So anxious was she to see that each person should be generously provided for, on this gladsome feast, that until enfeebled by age and failing health, she always presided at these Christmas distributions, dispensing a bountiful supply to each. Mother McAuley wrote to Mother Warde, previous to her departure with the foundation for Wexford: "My anxiety about the opening at Wexford increases every hour. Commence the visitation of the sick poor as soon as possible. Let four go out at a time, and do not let the least difference appear in dress, etc.

"The Sisters are so long expected, that every eye will be turned on them; and while we place

all our confidence in God, we must always act as if everything depended on our own exertions. Get Father Maher to preach at the Profession, and beg of him to assist in forming this new branch; a good beginning is of great importance. I sincerely hope that Father Lacey will not furnish the convent in a worldly style." The "worldly style" of which the foundress disapproved was far removed from the poor habitation styled a convent in which the Sisters first resided in Wexford. Their furnishings were so limited, as to cause them to carry their chairs from "choir" to Community Room, and from Community Room to Parlor, and vice versa.

This condition of things was, however, of short duration. Soon they had a neat, well-planned convent, arranged and furnished throughout in conventual order, through the generosity of several kind benefactors. Among these we find the names of Rt. Rev. Bishop Keating, Very Rev. Father Sinnott, Canon Lacey, Mary, Countess of Shrewsbury, and Richard Devereux.

The Sisters were resident in Wexford but a short time when the Wexford "Orphan House," a public institution, was given up to their charge.

<sup>1</sup> Of two professed-elect who went on the foundation.

### 70 Rev. Mother M. Xavier Warde

This work was considered a great blessing by the foundress and Mother M. Xavier, and both instructed the Sisters on their immense opportunities of doing good in this institution.

Mother Warde remained with the Sisters for some months. The new convent was dedicated to St. Michael, the Archangel. Trials were much in evidence, at first, but the untiring energy and courage of the Sisters, with God's blessing, brought them meritoriously through darkness to light.

When Mother M. Xavier Warde returned to Carlow, she left the pious Sister M. Teresa Kelly in charge of the Wexford House. Classes were formed for the instruction of adults, and no pains were spared in preparing persons for the sacraments. Mother Teresa was a favorite with the poor, whom she loved with a real personal affection; and none are so instinctively quick as the poor in discovering the sincerity of our affection for them. Once they are convinced that you are devoted to their interests, you can win their hearts and lead them to aspire to everything high and noble. Mother Teresa did much good in persuading sinners to approach the sacraments and amend their lives. Her devotedness to the

poor prisoners was remarkable, and it produced the best results. Many a hardened sinner among them, she won to God by her gentle power of persuasion.

Michael Devereux charitably donated to the community a sum of money large enough to build a House of Mercy, for the purpose of protecting young girls of good character. He also helped Mother Teresa to build a little chapel at Enniscorthy, with the sanction of the Bishop and priests, for the purpose of affording an easy means of hearing Mass to persons living at too great a distance from the Cathedral. The Sisters in Wexford left nothing undone in carrying out the example and instructions of Mother Warde. Their lives were a daily round of toil; yet they ever kept a little cell in their hearts for their Dear Lord and Master where no other person or interest found entrance. In all kinds of weather they went about relieving want and comforting those in distress, wherever their services were needed.

It is a fact worthy of notice that all of Mother Warde's foundations commenced with small beginnings; but each one has been blessed by God with a success far beyond the expectations of the most sanguine.

## 72 Rev. Mother M. Xavier Warde

Mother Teresa, the first Superior of Wexford, was a living model of the essential virtues of a true religious. Love of the friendless and unfortunate was an inborn quality of hers. She spent her life in the service of the suffering poor, and died a martyr to her charity, in 1866, while ministering to the plague-stricken when the cholera raged at Enniscorthy.

"Rest comes at length; though life be long and dreary,
The day must dawn, and darksome night be past;
All journeys end in welcomes to the weary,
And Heaven, the heart's true home, will come at last."

Mother McAuley's health had been failing rapidly for some time; but in October, 1841, it was noticed that she seemed to apprehend that her days, so full of good works, were drawing to a close. When she had set all things in order, and arranged papers and important concerns of the community, she remarked, "All is now ready." She gradually weakened from day to day until Monday, November 8, when she received the last Sacraments. On Thursday morning, November 11, the Holy Mass was offered in the infirmary, where she was. After Mass she requested to see each Sister privately. During this interview she advised each one according

to her needs, and then, calling all together by her bedside, she gave her favorite instruction on Union and Charity, repeating her well-loved theme, "Love one another."

The dying foundress sank rapidly during the day, yet conversed calmly with those who spoke with her for the last time on earth. To all present she imparted her kindly injunctions as perfectly as if she were in ordinary health. Rev. Mother Xavier learned her most severe lesson in detachment through not being permitted in the order of Divine Providence to be near Mother McAuley during her last precious moments on earth. In after years she passed tranquilly through trials, humiliations, and separations, but no other circumstance or event ever smote her very heart as did this absence from the dying foundress.

About five in the evening, on November 11, Mother McAuley requested the Sisters to give her the blessed candle. The prayers for the dying were commenced and kept up at intervals of a quarter of an hour, and answered by the foundress as long as she was able to form a syllable. A few minutes before eight o'clock she gave her blessing to the community assembled,

#### 74 Rev. Mother M. Xavier Warde

and to all the Superiors and Sisters of the Order. Prayers were resumed for the departing, and peacefully her precious soul went forth to meet its Creator and Judge. From the All-Merciful Master of life and death we can firmly hope she obtained the reward of all her works, since, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."

"Paradise, Paradise, The mansion of the blest; Paradise, Paradise, The true, the eternal rest. Never to sin, never to weep: To love and Love again; To be near unto the Heart of God, And never give Him pain. Paradise, Paradise, Sweet Jesus, take me there — But if Thou wilt, my dearest Lord, My cross I'll longer bear. I would not go a single hour — Sooner than Thou didst will: But, O my God, my weary heart Longs for its bright home still."

## Chapter V.

# TRIBUTES TO THE MEMORY OF THE FOUNDRESS. WESTPORT.

AD and sorrowful, indeed, the Sisters were, With the "Light to their feet" and the joy of their heart gone from them, in the death of their spiritual Mother. She had pointed out to them the silver dawn in the darkest night of trial, and had often explained to them God's dealing as only God's servant can. To add to their grief, they suddenly realized that they had no cemetery of their own, and the thought of having Reverend Mother's remains removed from them was a fresh and insupportable affliction. They applied to His Grace, the Archbishop, to have part of the garden consecrated for a cemetery, — a request that was readily granted by the Most Rev. Dr. Murray. It was consecrated by Rt. Rev. Dr. Kinsella, Bishop of Kilkenny.

On Saturday, Nov. 13, 1841, after the Solemn Requiem Mass and Office of the Dead had been offered for the repose of the soul of our revered foundress, she was laid to rest — the first occupant of "God's Acre" — in the Sisters' garden at Baggot Street. A simple cross is raised where she is laid, with a request inscribed thereon for prayers for the eternal repose of her soul. Thus did Mother McAuley's desire to be buried in the earth like the poor come to be fulfilled, although, while living, it seemed impossible for her to have other resting-place in death than the vault in the Carmelite Church.

Many beautiful testimonials to her pious, useful life were given by distinguished prelates and clergymen. The brevity of this simple lifestory of her eldest and specially-loved spiritual daughter does not permit us to record any, except the important facts of the life and death of our venerated foundress. Hence we quote only one of those edifying tributes to her memory.

It is taken from the Popular Life of Catherine McAuley, by T. A. Butler, and was pronounced by the Very Rev. Dean Gaffney:—

"It is not necessary, in speaking of the revered foundress of the Sisters of Mercy, to conjure up an imaginary picture of perfection and benevolence, and then apply it to the character we wish to praise. No, her eulogy would be written by the mere mention of the one-hundredth part of what she has done for suffering and destitute humanity. In 1830 she entered the Presentation Convent, George's Hill, to prepare herself for the great work she was about to undertake. In 1831 she commenced the foundation of the 'Order of Mercy,' and in 1841 she died. How short a time! Yet how wonderful the works of that mighty mind, of that expansive heart! They would hardly seem credible had they not happened in our own time and passed under our own eyes.

"This great and good woman had three objects in view in founding the Order of Mercy: The instruction of poor girls; the visiting and relief of the sick; and the spiritual and temporal care of distressed women of good character. And far beyond her own most sanguine expectations, she succeeded in realizing her desires. Whoever visits the schools at Baggot Street will be consoled and delighted by the scene that presents itself to his view. But what shall I say of her charity towards poor servants who had no resource, no friends, no home? She built a house for them, she supported them, she clothed them,

78

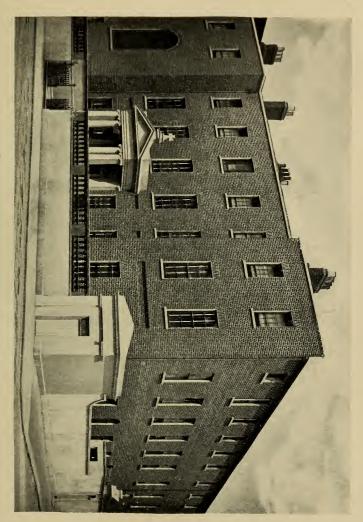
she instructed them, she provided situations for thousands of them. If all this good has been effected by one Convent of Mercy, how much may be effected by the fourteen she was instrumental in establishing?

"Few ever left this world that could, with greater confidence, expect to hear on the great accounting day, from the lips of our Divine Redeemer, 'Come, ye blessed of my Father, possess the kingdom prepared for you. For I was hungry, and you gave Me to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me to drink; I was a stranger, and you took Me in; naked, and you clothed Me; sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me. As much as you did to one of these, my least brethren, you did it to Me.'

"Catherine McAuley's death was such as might be expected from a life replete with good works. It was the death of the Just, which is precious in the sight of the Lord. Her soul was calm and joyful, and perfectly resigned to the Divine Will. The Sisters of Mercy have one more advocate in Heaven. May their Order prosper! May they ever keep before their eyes the example left them by their foundress! May they ever imitate her virtues, and they will be accounted worthy before God and Man."

As "Baggot Street" is the Parent House of the Order, the spot hallowed by Mother M. Xavier Warde's consecration to God, and as it was the dearest spot on earth to her affectionate heart, her life would be incomplete without a description of this fountain-head of the Institute, — the place where the tiny mustard-seed was planted, from which has grown the mighty tree spreading its branches into every land and clime where the English language is spoken. After the death of the foundress, in reverential respect to her memory and honor to her patron, the Sisters had the Convent dedicated to St. Catherine of Sienna. Our readers may perhaps be interested in a true and vivid description of it, as given by the author of "Irish Homes and Irish Hearts." This we quote here: convent in Baggot Street is an extensive building, with a very plain exterior. Within, much pains have been spent on decorations of a strictly monastic character. The cloister and convent chapel are beautiful. There are immense poor schools at the rear of the building, a large House of Mercy, and an institute for training teachers.

The three principal ends Miss McAuley had in view in designing her Order were: The care of schools, the visitation of the sick poor, and the charge of a House of Mercy; and to these three works the Sisters are bound by rule to attend as far as may be practicable. The House of Mercy is meant as a temporary refuge for respectable girls and women out of employment. It is chiefly filled by servants out of place, and has often proved a most valuable refuge for those in danger. The inmates are taught to work for their own support, either at needle or laundry work, and the Sisters endeavor to procure them situations. It is not intended they should remain any length of time in the House, but only until they can find employment. In addition to these three works of charity, the Sisters may undertake any others in accordance with the spirit of their Rule. The institution for training teachers, as alluded to in the above account, has since been organized as a training college, where poor girls are educated for teachers, who, on receiving a certificate from the commissioners of education. are admitted as teachers in the national schools. This college, while conducted by the Sisters of Mercy, is supported entirely by the government



Convent of Mercy, Baggot St., Dublin.



and subject to official regulations." Besides the training college, two other institutions have been added to the Baggot Street Convent, since 1841, namely, the Prison Refuge at Golden Bridge, and the Mater Misericordiae Hospital.

The Refuge receives the highest praise in the reports of directors and chaplains of convict prisons. The Hospital is the best and most important in Ireland, and it is said to be the peer of any institution of its kind in the world in the completeness of its arrangements, the skill of its medical staff, and the competency of its nurses. It has become a great school of medicine and surgery, together with its popularity as a first-class hospital. The following words from the Solicitor-General, Mr. Dowse, M. P., since a Baron of the Exchequer, gives some insight into its management: "As a Protestant, I feel a pride and pleasure in taking part in this work, for in this place relief is administered to all, without consideration of sect or party. The only passport required is that the person applying should need its shelter and assistance."

In the first annual report of this well-known hospital we have the following testimony from the Lord Chancellor of Ireland: "Whether the candidate be Catholic, Protestant, Mohammedan, or Jew, he is God's work, made to His image and likeness, and the gate opens freely to him, without a question as to his religious faith. He is not asked to violate his conscience, that he may obtain relief. The name of charity is not desecrated by intolerance. It is not made a bait to corrupt, or a sword to persecute wretches broken down by disease to incapacity of resistance, and powerless to help themselves."

And again we read: "The Sisters of Mercy are truly consoling angels in this hospital. They minister with their own hands to its suffering inmates, repelled by no form of disease, however loathsome, and declining no office, however mean, where modesty is not offended, so that they mitigate a pang, or speed a soul more peacefully to heaven. And not less admirable is the rule by which they open their doors, at all times and under all circumstances, to every human being, without let or hindrance, who needs their help. Suffering is the sole condition of its own relief. It requires no passport from wealth or rank. It is subjected to no cold or jealous scrutiny. There is no fear that a human being will perish at the door while those within deliberate on the propriety of his admission."

Perhaps no day passed in dear Mother M. Xavier Warde's life, when the usual recreations were taken, that she did not expatiate on the virtues and character of our venerated foundress. Catherine McAuley. Therefore the older Sisters on all of Mother Warde's foundations can picture her almost as vividly as if they had lived with her. Her face was very handsome, with deep blue eyes, mild and expressive of much beauty of soul within. Her features were regular, and the gentle curves of her well-formed chin added to the already sweet expression of her mouth. She had a charming repose of manner, simple and unaffected, yet queenly, withal. She was always easy of approach, and interested in every topic of conversation calculated to broaden the intellect or refine the heart. In all her movements and in all her ways she was the perfect religious; her soul full of tenderness but strong as well. She was most unselfish, thinking ever of others with no thought of her own convenience. She had fine natural qualities, and these were ennobled by religion. Her success in all her works was attributed first to the blessing of God, and then to her associate Sisters. who, by their assiduity and piety, attracted the Divine blessing.

A few months before Mother McAuley's death, Very Rev. Dean Burke applied to her for Sisters for Westport. She referred the foundation to Mother M. Xavier Warde at Carlow.

In 1842 the Most Rev. John MacHale applied once more to Carlow in the interests of the Dean, who was pastor of Westport. Accordingly, on Sept. 5, 1842, Mother Warde and four Sisters left Carlow for the new foundation. They remained one night with the Sisters at Tullamore, and the next with the Presentation Nuns at Tuam, where His Grace, Archbishop MacHale, gave them a warm welcome to his diocese, and wished them to spend the next day at his palace. Mother Xavier, always ready to yield to the least desire of clergymen, gracefully acquiesced, and often spoke afterward of the favor the good Archbishop conferred on them by his condescending courtesy. Any kindness bestowed on her or her religious was never forgotten, and long after this good prelate had gone to his reward she would recall his many generous favors, asking the Sisters to remember him often in their prayers.

Their delay at Tuam disappointed Mother Xavier in her desire to make the foundation on

the 8th of September, the feast of the Nativity of Our Blessed Lady. They arrived at Westport on September 9, and a solemn Te Deum greeted their arrival.

Dean Burke gave them his own house for present use, and two hundred pounds wherewith to commence to build a new convent. His Grace, the Archbishop, contributed seven hundred and seventy pounds, and the Marquis of Sligo presented them with three acres of land as a beautiful site for the convent. The author of the *Annals* of the Sisters of Mercy says: "The Westport convent, the first built in Mayo for three centuries, is in one of the loveliest situations in the world, within view of Craagh-Patrick, and under the shadow of a life-like Calvary erected on a hill."

Mother Warde remained at Westport until all the Works of Mercy were commenced, then left Sister M. Paula Cullen in charge. Reverend Mother gave the instructions for Religious Reception and Profession for the first year, and attended the ceremonies. The convent thrived, and has sent out large foundations to different towns in the vicinity, as well as to Australia. Among those at home, Sligo is, perhaps, the

most noteworthy, on account of the flourishing training college for teachers attached to the Convent and conducted by the Sisters. The student teachers number as many as one hundred and fifty. Their efficient training stamps their work as teachers with success. Sir John Lentaigne considered the industrial school attached to this convent unsurpassed in Ireland.

Daniel O'Connell, the Great Liberator, paid the Sisters of Mercy the following handsome tribute of regard, at this time, in one of his world-renowned speeches: "No country on the face of the earth is like Ireland! Look at the fairest portion of creation — possessing all the virtues that adorn and endear life — forsaking their homes, their families, their friends! Look at the Sisters of Mercy clothed in coarse black garments! They seem poor, but in their deportment you recognize the refined lady! See them in the schoolroom, developing the intellects of our children, training the child-heart to love its Maker and Redeemer!

"See them in Hospital ward caring for suffering humanity!

"See them in orphanage and industrial school, training the neglected and forsaken youth of Ireland!

"See them hastening along the street to the lone couch of some sick fellow-creature fast sinking into the grave, with none to console, none to soothe! They come with consolation and hope, and bring down by their prayers the blessing of God on the dying sinner, on themselves, and on their country. Oh! such a country is too good to be oppressed!"

# Chapter VI.

FOUNDATION OF THE ORDER IN THE UNITED STATES.

ATHER MICHAEL O'CONNOR, pastor of St. Paul's Church, Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, was asked, in 1835, to translate into Italian some chapters of the Rules of the Sisters of Mercy. In this way he first learned of the Order and its works. As he studied the spirit of the Rules and Constitutions, he became more and more convinced of the good to be accomplished by establishing the Institute in the United States. In 1843 Father O'Connor was named first Bishop of Pittsburg. He went to Rome to beg of the Pope to reconsider the appointment, alleging, as his excuse for declining, his strong attraction toward the Society of Jesus. "My one great desire," he said, "is to become a Jesuit." The reigning Pontiff, Pope Gregory XVI., considered it better that he should accept the mitre, and thus accosted him: "A Bishop Foundation of Order in United States 89 first; a Jesuit afterwards." He was consecrated in Rome, Aug. 15, 1843.

Doctor Cullen,<sup>1</sup> then President of the Irish College at Rome, was a firm friend of Bishop O'Connor, and, having seven relatives in the Carlow Convent, he naturally referred the Bishop to that source for laborers in the Master's Vineyard in the United States.

From the Eternal City His Lordship proceeded to Carlow, and on Oct. 4, 1843, he and Father Maher — nephew of Doctor Cullen and pastor of St. Leo's—called at the Convent. The pious prelate presented to the Sisters the great need of religious teachers in his diocese, and brought to their notice the fact that much more good would result from their labors in America than could be attained in Ireland.

Bishop O'Connor's fervent appeal for religious was wisely considered, and earnestly recommended to God in prayer by each one of the Carlow community.

All felt an ardent desire to go forth into this great field of labor for the salvation of souls, yet no one expressed any wish, lest God's Will might be in some degree frustrated if the choice

<sup>1</sup> Afterward raised to the rank of Cardinal.

of the missionary band was not left to those who had the authority to decide. The whole community concurred in the opinion that if the foundation were undertaken Mother M. Xavier Warde seemed to be the one best qualified to take charge of the responsible enterprise.

At a recent election in the Carlow Convent she had been made Mistress of Novices, and Mother M. Cecilia Maher, the Mother Superior. Her relief from the office of Superior seemed providential, and an indication of the designs of God to make her the foundress of the Order in the United States.

After much prayer and deliberation on the part of Mother M. Cecilia and the Sisters, it was decided that seven of their number should be sent to Pittsburg, with Mother Warde in charge of the foundation. Each of the twenty-three Sisters in the Carlow Convent cheerfully volunteered to embark for the New World if God desired the sacrifice.

Mother M. Cecilia selected the following: Sister M. Margaret O'Brien, Sister M. Veronica McDerby, Sister M. Philomena Reid, Sister M. Aloysius Strange, Sister M. Josephine Cullen, Sister M. Elizabeth Strange, and Mother M. Xavier Warde.



The Rt. Rev. Bishop O'Connor. (As a Jesuit).



Preparations were commenced at once for their departure. The seven volunteers overcame obstacles and oppositions with an energy which was truly edifying. They bravely set aside all the natural feelings of their own hearts for families and friends, and worked with generous enthusiasm in making arrangements for the arduous task of transplanting the Institute to American soil.

Bishop Haley approved of the mission, but desired Mother Warde and Sister M. Aloysius Strange to return to his diocese in two years from the time of their going away. He also gave the other missioners liberty to return to their first religious home whenever they pleased. None returned; their days were heroically spent in the service of the Divine Master in the land of their adoption. The Carlow community was so considerate as to transfer the dowries of these seven foundresses to the Pittsburg Convent.

As soon as the important business part of his errand was accomplished, Bishop O'Connor went to other cities of Ireland to secure priests and ecclesiastical students for his diocese. Further business arrangements at Carlow were made through the mail.

Mother Warde and her companions bade farewell to their Convent home on All Souls' Day, 1843. The sorrow of these warm-hearted women, as they quietly overcame the pangs of separation, was intense. The townspeople were one vast cortége of mourners. The Bishop, priests, and crowds of citizens accompanied them outside the suburbs of Carlow, showering blessings and good wishes on their noble undertaking. The author of the Annals says: "On a bright November morning, when the leaves were red and yellow, though the air was still balmy, the little band of pilgrims — a grain of mustard-seed, indeed - wound their way out of the chapel, in which they had consecrated themselves to God, and looked their last on the pretty town they loved so well."

They took carriages for Naas, where they were warmly received by their religious Sisters. Next morning they departed for Dublin. Here they were the recipients of every attention from Mother Delaney and the Sisters at Baggot Street. They prayed at the grave of our foundress, and spent hours of silent adoration in the chapel where Mother M. Xavier Warde had, ten years before, pronounced the vows that consecrated

At eight o'clock in the evening of November 4, they assembled in the chapel for Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, and then continued their journey to Kingston, the port of Dublin. From here they set sail for Liverpool.

On their arrival at Liverpool the missionaries went to St. Ethelburga's Convent, which had been founded a few months before at Mount Vernon. Mother Warde had been named for this foundation, at one time, and was much interested in it. They remained some time with their English Sisters, as the ship on which they were to embark did not sail for a few days.

Owing to the fact that this house was newly founded, and at that date the only convent in Liverpool, there was much to be done. The visiting Sisters took part in all the Works of Mercy during the days they awaited embarkation.

Mother Warde, with her special facility for giving instruction, was kept busy with adults preparing for the Sacraments. They came in such numbers that immense crowds were col-

lected at the gate where they passed in and out.

On November 10, the Queen of the West, the largest vessel crossing the Atlantic at that time, was in readiness to set sail.

Bishop O'Connor lost no time in conveying the news to the nuns, who were quickly prepared for their ocean journey. His Lordship had been successful in obtaining one priest (Father Wilson) and six students for his diocese. These were also ready to embark on the Queen of the West. By order of their Superiors, the religious travelled in secular garb.

During their early missionary career it was sometimes expedient to don this mode of dress; but Mother Warde lived to see the time when such disguise was no longer necessary.

Messrs. Cullen and Verdun, uncles of Sister M. Josephine Cullen, showed the Sisters every kindness, and provided them with many comforts for their long journey. The vessel weighed anchor at about twelve o'clock. Once on board, the nuns offered a fervent prayer of gratitude and praise to the good God for making them His feeble instruments in the promotion of the Kingdom of Christ on the American Continent.

The voyage was a stormy one, and several

captain and all on board requested the Bishop to conduct religious exercises. He acquiesced, and kept up the practice until the ship reached

New York.

Doctor O'Connor was an orator by nature, and his sermons made a marked impression on his hearers. The non-Catholic ministers on board showed him sincere respect, and delighted to converse with him, partly on account of his untiring zeal in the cause of religion, and also for his sweet simplicity of manner in his intercourse with them.

Many of the steerage and cabin passengers were ill, and the Sisters used much of their time in ministering to them. Diaries kept during the voyage record many edifying examples of patience in suffering, and resignation to the Holy Will of God, practised by the poor emigrants on board.

During the second week the storm ceased, and the prominent gentlemen organized a Literary Society with Bishop O'Connor as President. They named their society, The Atlantic Social and Literary Association of the good ship, Queen of the West. The Sisters were invited to the meetings, and they would have declined the honor had not the Bishop desired them to contribute to the intellectual entertainment of those interested by their presence, and by essays written by them, and read by His Lordship, to the unfeigned delight of the association.

December 10 brought the ship in sight of land. The Bishop and several other gentlemen went on shore late in the evening, but the nuns remained on board until the following day, when they were received on shore by Bishop O'Connor, Father Quarter, then the Bishop-elect of Chicago, and other eminent persons.

The Sisters were brought to the residence of Bishop Hughes, who gave them a cordial greeting, and joined Bishop O'Connor and Father Quarter in escorting them to the Sacred Heart Convent, on Houston Street.

Bishop Hughes introduced the seven missionaries to Madame Hardy and her community, asking hospitality for them until they could commence their journey to Pittsburg. The Ladies of the Sacred Heart were kind beyond measure, a favor gratefully remembered by Mother Warde and her religious.

## Foundation of Order in United States 97

After three days, our travellers started by rail for Philadelphia. Here they remained four days with the Sisters of Charity. During this time many of the clergy and laity called at the Convent to welcome them to the United States. Miss Emily Harper of Baltimore, a grand-daughter of Charles Carroll of "Independence" fame, was among the number who paid their respects to the Sisters. A warm friendship commenced here between Reverend Mother and Miss Harper, which lasted during their remaining years of life. On account of donations freely given at opportune times, Miss Harper became a noted benefactress of the Convents established by Mother Warde.

After assisting at Mass and receiving Holy Communion, on December 18, the Sisters took the stage for Pittsburg. Much of the journey was made over mountain tracks and deep ravines, where the travellers were forced to walk. As they journeyed past Loretto, the Bishop called their attention to the scene of the Princepriest's labors.

At an early hour, on December 21, they reached Pittsburg, and went directly to the Cathedral, where they heard Mass and received Holy Communion. The Sisters of Charity brought them to the Orphan Asylum, and entertained them until the next day, when they took up their abode in their own Convent.

This house was a four-story building on Penn Street. It contained a well-finished, airy basement which was used for a school in the early days of the foundation. Mother Warde ordered all the necessary furniture, immediately, and on Christmas Day, the different apartments were all religiously furnished, and the house in perfect order.

The Sisters were greatly consoled at the coincidence of the birth of the Order in the United States with the blessed time when the Christian world commemorates the birth of our Divine Redeemer.

They heard the early Mass with great fervor, and saw, for the first time, an altar decorated with evergreen. Bishop O'Connor announced at this Mass his elevation to the episcopacy, asking the prayers of the faithful for the grace to perform the duties of his office in the manner most pleasing to Almighty God. He explained to his congregation, the great burden he had assumed with the reception of the mitre, which

Foundation of Order in United States 99 must ever be regarded as the crown of thorns, — demanding sacrifice, unselfishness, and even perfection from those on whose brow it rests.

On the day after Christmas the Sisters commenced the visitation of the sick. On December 28, they went into Retreat for the renewal of vows on the first day of the New Year. The Bishop gave the instructions and meditations, which were both spiritual and practical. He emphasized the importance of prayerfulness and charity in the daily life of a religious, and insisted on the necessity of each Sister striving for perfection, thereby attracting the Divine blessing on her community, and on her work.

The nuns were given charge of the girls of the Cathedral Sunday School. The Bishop's students took charge of the boys. The Sunday School classes were taught in a commodious school-building, erected in 1843. On the first floor, Mother M. Xavier Warde instructed a large class of adults in her own impressive manner, by clear explanations of the principal truths, and by striking examples. One point she was wont to make at every Catechism lesson, namely: the good to be derived from approaching the sacraments every month. Non-Catholics heard

of her and flocked to hear her instructions. She was gracious and simple in her intercourse with them, and manifested a lively interest in giving them any information they desired.

On account of the extensive visitation of the sick, and the large number of the adult classes for instruction in Christian Doctrine, day schools were not opened in Pittsburg until eight months after the foundation.

Agriculture, mining, railroads, and foundries attracted an immense fixed and floating population to this enterprising city and the surrounding country. For the entire circuit, covering nearly half of the state, the spiritual wants of the people were ministered to by the Bishop and three priests, Father Gibb, Father Garland, and Father Wilson. Hence, multitudes in need of private instruction, for the reception of the sacraments, could not be reached by these ministers of the Gospel, and the Sisters were called upon to form Catechism classes for men, women, and children, which were held at stated hours of the day and evening.

## Chapter VII.

#### EARLY DAYS IN PITTSBURG.

BEFORE the departure of Rev. Michael O'Connor for Rome, in 1843, Miss Eliza Tiernan, the daughter of a wealthy banker, asked his advice about entering the novitiate of the Sisters of Mercy in Dublin. He assumed an air of indifference, simply saying, "Oh, do not be in a hurry, we may at some future time have the Sisters of Mercy here."

This answer seemed unsatisfactory, and left her quite unsettled, as none of her worldly advantages could satisfy the longings of her noble soul, whose ideal was the perfection of the religious state. She prayed constantly to know the Divine Will, and after receiving Holy Communion to finish a Novena she had been making to St. Francis Xavier, she offered herself to God to enter His service in the Order to which He, in His Divine Providence, would guide her. On

returning from his office that day, her father handed her a copy of The Tablet. The first item her eyes rested upon read somewhat like this: "Sailed from Liverpool for Pittsburg, United States, on board the Queen of the West, Bishop O'Connor, Father Wilson, six ecclesiastical students, and seven Sisters of Mercy." In this newspaper paragraph she recognized the answer to her prayers, and saw why her Director was slow in advising her to enter religion before his return from Rome. She was one of the first to welcome the Sisters to Pittsburg, and soon opened her heart to Mother Warde, who prayed for, and encouraged her, in her pious design of turning away from the "beaten track" to aspire to higher things. On Feb. 2, 1844, Miss Tiernan entered the novitiate. She was then twenty-five years old,—an accomplished woman, possessed of great personal attractions, and above all, burning with a holy ardor to do great things for God and His poor. There were comparatively few materially destitute in the United States in those days, but there were millions buried in the depths of spiritual and intellectual poverty. The first American Sister of Mercy became the ideal religious, — a woman

with one motive — God and the things pertaining to His Divine interests.

Miss Margaret O'Brien, a postulant who came from Carlow on the foundation, received the habit and white veil February 22. In after years she was appointed Superior of the Chicago house. On April II, Sister M. Aloysius Strange made her vows and Miss Eliza Tiernan received the habit of the Order, taking for her religious name Sister Mary Xavier. This ceremony took place in St. Paul's Cathedral. The Bishop preached an eloquent sermon, giving a full explanation of the spirit and duties of the Order of Mercy. The church was crowded to its utmost capacity, and all went away enthusiastic over the preacher, saying among themselves, "The life of a Sister of Mercy is indeed a heavenly life, full of usefulness in this world, and worthy of reward hereafter"

After the first few months, many subjects entered the novitiate, and in a short time teachers were chosen for the different classes in prospective, each taking a special course of training in the study assigned her.

Mother Warde spared no pains in establishing her subjects solidly in the principles of the Spirit-

ual life. In the early days on Penn Street, she gave frequent admonitions to the religious, on the qualities that should characterize the Spouse of Christ. She never tired of repeating: "Let not your thoughts rest on earth; keep them buried in the Divinity, and busy yourselves about spreading God's Kingdom in the hearts of men."

She had the faculty of seeing noble qualities in every one, and the more she observed defects of character or training in those she governed, the more careful she was that while cautiously and tenderly using the "pruning knife," she made them feel that she had a high estimate of their worth. She dealt with those she admonished as if they were diamonds needing but a little polishing to show their brilliancy. Human nature loves to be trusted, and human beings may sometimes fail in their efforts to attain nobility of character for the want of the helpful sympathy and good opinion of those whose appreciation they value most.

Her standard of perfection was based on the faithful performance of every duty; the correction of defects; and the quiet struggle to acquire the different virtues through much self-annihilation.

The two powerful weapons she was wont to put into the hands of those who were very much in earnest about becoming good religious, were humble prayer and victory over self-love. She often quoted a holy Jesuit who said: "Sweetness in prayer and frequent Communion are not the means but the ends. The ultimate end of all is, that union with God that never can be attained in its fulness, until we reach our heavenly country. Our end here below is to correct our faults and acquire solid virtue, for the Love of God consists much more in doing than in feeling." "Let us at all times, with childlike simplicity, cast ourselves into the bosom of His Mercy which is infinite. If trials await you and what soul escapes trials? - prepare for them, by detaching yourself with fidelity from God's gifts, that you may cling to God Himself, to God alone."

With all her interior recollection, her ideas of spirituality never soared to heights inconsistent with her good common sense. God is simple; all His works and ways are simple beyond our ken. His holiest servants have become eminent not for their elevated aspirations towards the Deity, not for the ecstasies with which

God, sometimes, was pleased to favor them, but for their simple, trustful love, which inspired them to ask for nothing, but to sit, like Mary at the feet of Jesus, and to gaze into the beauty and blessedness of His Divine Face. It is related of a French peasant that, day by day, he knelt for hours in the parish church, before the Tabernacle. One day the curé questioned him, as to what he did, and what he said to God, as he knelt there, so completely forgetful of all else, save the Divine Presence. The simple, at the same time all-wise answer of the prayerful peasant, has been paraphrased in the following wellknown lines, which we insert here because they portray so clearly our revered Mother's idea of devotion.

"They tell me of grand, seraphic prayer,
They speak of the light that is gathered there,
They say that to mountain heights above
Fly up the eagles of holy love;
I hear them, but never ask to soar
While I gaze on the little Golden Door.

"It is not praise, it is scarcely prayer,
I only think of Him, dwelling there—
The heart that is never strange or cold,
The love that is always new and old,
Till cares and sorrows can vex no more
While I gaze on the little Golden Door.

- "I bring before Him, the crowded day;
  I try to hear what His voice would say
  If others are right, and if I am wrong,
  Am I the weak, and are they the strong?
  I pass my thoughts and my feelings o'er
  While I gaze on the little Golden Door.
- "He so calm and untroubled still,
  We so tossed by our wayward will,
  So often sinking, so prone to fall,
  He watcheth, He heareth, He knoweth all;
  Give me, O Lord, of Thy wisdom's store
  While I gaze on the little Golden Door.
- "I only ask for *one* word to show

  The way Thou wouldst have my footsteps go,
  One little beam of Thy truthful light,
  For the path grows dark, it will soon be night;
  And the hour is coming, when never more
  Shall I gaze on the little Golden Door."

# Chapter VIII.

#### ESTABLISHMENT OF SCHOOLS.

REV. FATHER NEUMANN, a priest of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, gave the first August Retreat. He, like Bishop O'Connor, dwelt largely on the paramount importance of the Sisters striving by every means in their power to be interior religious, if they wished their active labors to bear lasting fruit. When the Retreat was finished, Reverend Mother and her enthusiastic corps of helpers began preparations for the opening of the first day schools, which took place in September, 1844. A large basement was fitted up for school purposes. It is true, this crude apartment could afford but poor accommodations, yet it was quite as convenient as many of the pioneer schoolhouses of those early days; and with good methods, tact, and an enthusiastic love of her profession, a teacher with high ideals can obtain

good results amid many inconveniences. Not discouraged by drawbacks, but with heart and soul in her work, she may be compared to some of the sweet-faced, thrifty mothers to be met with on the daily rounds of visitation. Their heads are busy planning, and their hands are busy executing many things which will elevate and render happy and useful the young lives intrusted to them.

The system of teaching Mother Warde adopted was that which she had used in Ireland, and one emphatically preferred by the foundress. The time-table was changed to suit the wants of this country. Under the revised Distribution of Time, schools opened at nine in the morning, and were dismissed at twelve. An intermission of two hours was given the pupils for dinner and recreation. The afternoon session began at two, and continued until four o'clock.

Arithmetic was taught for an hour each day, in the early period of the session, when the minds of the pupils were fresh and active, and the reasoning powers at their best.

As the pupils advanced, the higher branches of mathematics were introduced. Reverend Mother acknowledged her want of ability in this branch

of education, and gave the charge of these classes to Sisters who were competent mathematicians.

History and geography, English and book-keeping were carefully taught for a specified time on alternate days.

Mother Warde had collections of classical stories for little ones in the lower grades which the other Sisters often used for reproduction.

Reading, writing, spelling, and English grammar held important places in the daily programmes, and the graduates of this school went out from its portals proficient in these branches. Catechism was explained for thirty minutes each day; the children were taught, with much precision, their duties to God, their neighbor, and themselves. Dry facts were never presented to the pupil. Every truth was illustrated by some beautiful example or soul-stirring story. This method of instruction in Christian Doctrine has been adopted by nearly all the communities of the Order; the experience of those who take an active part in preparing children and adults for the sacraments has proved it to be a most effective one. Reverend Mother insisted on daily lessons conducive to correct position in sitting, walking, standing, etc. Practice in graceful carriage,

bowing, repose of manner, modest control of the eyes and countenance, and other essentials of good breeding had a special place in the daily distribution of time.

She attached much importance to educating the children in civility of manners and goodness of heart. In that humble school on Penn Street, taught by these laborious nuns, the rules of politeness and social etiquette were as thoroughly instilled as could be done in a fashionable boarding school. The pupils were rendered intelligent, obedient, and respectful to parents, superiors, and companions, thus meriting the goodwill of all with whom they came in contact.

The formation of the child's character was not lost sight of in those pioneer schools of the early days in the United States. Many incidents recorded in the journals of the Sisters recall Mother Warde as she was in her first years in Pittsburg, — tall, erect, and full of earnestness, teaching the little ones the wickedness of lying, and the necessity of honesty in thought, word, and deed.

Truth and sincerity were strongly fostered, while every effort was used to stamp out falsehood and deceit. The children were shown the

manner in which the Christian virtues may be practised and the opposite vices uprooted.

By close attention to the cultivation of the heart, mind, and judgment, the pupils were aided in developing good habits, and thus, gradually but surely, cheerful, healthy characters were formed. God's eternal law was so strongly inculcated that it could not fail to regulate their conduct in after-life. They were trained to habits of correct thinking, speaking, and acting by ever comparing their actions and words with the standards of right and wrong.

Music was taught in one of the parlors of the convent by Sister M. Philomena and Sister M. Xavier.

A taste for good reading was ingeniously cultivated in the schools. For this end Reverend Mother established a library, where useful, interesting reading matter was given out and returned weekly.

She was a firm believer in the circulating library as a powerful means of elevating the minds and hearts of the young intrusted to her care, and wherever she made a foundation she organized a library.

The girls of "those good, old days," as we

heard an aged religious remark not long ago, "were taught to use the needle as well as the pen; to make and to mend; to darn and to knit, and become useful in the home. When they left school they took part in the general sewing and employments of the family, instead of wasting their time on the 'fads' and sentimental novel-reading of the hour."

It was Mother Warde's custom to give a series of "Talks" to the Sisters engaged in teaching, on the use of mild methods of discipline.

She discountenanced anything in the form of severe punishment, which destroys honest sentiment by degrading the mind, and rendering untractable the heart of the child. Love, and the fear of losing the esteem and good opinion of teacher and parents were, she considered, the best controlling forces in the schoolroom. She advised the teacher to show the deepest interest in the welfare of the pupil, but never, on any account, to be familiar, or let the child grow free, for "familiarity breeds contempt."

Fear of God — of His displeasure, and of His punishments — well instilled into children will restrain them from any vicious conduct.

Merits, judicious praise, and the pleasure of

looking forward to the approval of teachers and parents are a powerful stimulus to study. Useful and constant employment of time is an unfailing preventive of restlessness and mischief. Encouraging the spirit of emulation among the pupils by various ingenious plans, and presenting the lessons in such a manner as to be thoroughly interesting to the child, she considered the most successful method of obtaining favorable results. "To instruct," she would say, "is an easy matter; but to educate requires ingenuity, energy, and perseverance without limit." The practice of requiring the pupils to write some paragraphs of history, reading, spelling, etc., loss of merits, removing from sections of "Honor," suspension of "small charges" given to children as rewards, together with other mild punishments of like nature, administered with firmness, were recommended by Reverend Mother as the wisest mode of punishing imperfections in conduct and lessons.

The school gave satisfaction to parents and pupils, and was, with its numbers of bright, studious children, Bishop O'Connor's pride and joy. His Lordship often pronounced it, "the happiest spot in Pittsburg." The religious who

conducted it spared no effort in their labor of love, while the saintly prelate who supported it, and visited it almost daily, left nothing undone that could in any way contribute to the spiritual and temporal welfare of its pupils.

Many new subjects entered the community during the first year, and the school attendance increased so rapidly that, in April, 1846, the Bishop provided a large building, well adapted for educational purposes, into which the schools were removed.

The poorhouse in Allegheny and the Penitentiary were visited by the Sisters every week.

Mother Warde's gift of attracting non-Catholics to the faith seemed to be a hindrance to this good work, for the Superintendent took offence at the influence she exercised, and refused admission to the Sisters. She had never interfered in the religious belief of a single prisoner, unless requested to enlighten him on the duties of a Christian. Had these unfortunate creatures known the Ten Commandments of God, and formed the habit of practising them, — the only doctrine Reverend Mother had explained — their places might not have been behind prison bars.

But, thank God, this incident has been almost an exceptional instance in the experience of the Sisters of Mercy. They have seldom received anything but courteous attention from prison or public officials, who are always glad and willing to have comfort and sympathy administered to the unfortunate human beings who, as prisoners of justice, must pay the penalty of their misdeeds.

A visit from those who come in Christ's consoling name, to speak the encouraging word, and point heavenward to the despairing soul, must be productive of good.

Wonderful is the grace which God showers upon those souls who come to Him with sincere sorrow for the past, and with firm purposes of never again displeasing Him. One sympathetic look, one word of kind admonition may touch the hardened heart, and cause it to leap upwards into the arms of God's infinite Love. It was this conviction that caused St. Vincent De Paul to become Almoner-General to the miserable outcasts chained to the oars of the hulks in the galleys, toiling like beasts of burden. It caused him to exchange places with the prisoner; to wear his chains; to live on his fare; to do his work; to dwell in the loathsome society of con-

victs. God had other designs for the saint, and in the orderings of Divine Providence he was set free, but not before he had elevated the minds and hearts of these poor convicts, and won many of them to contrition and ardent longings for virtue and purity of life.

How many there are who flaunt their opinions about the absurdity of spending time and energy in endeavoring to soften the hearts, and lead to paths of righteousness those who have degraded their manhood and womanhood by the sinfulness of their lives! Perhaps many of such men and women are outcasts on account of their birth, their surroundings, or their early training, and appear before the courts of justice more from lack of character to resist their evil tendencies than from malice in their wrong-doing.

Those who are severe in their judgments of these poor fallen ones, for whom Our Lord suffered and died, should remember the following lines, by Father Faber, on the Penitent Magdalen, read by so many to their own greater comfort, since none of us can say, we are better than the "just man," who sinned seven times a day, or, if God's grace were withdrawn, would not become the most sinful of His children:

"And yet thou, too, once wert wandering,
Once wert soiled with darkest stains,
Who art now all-fair and spotless
In the land where Jesus reigns.
Thou wert wretched, thou wert drooping,
Thou wert crushed upon the earth,
Who art greater now and grander
Than an angel in his mirth.

"Thou didst fly unto thy Saviour,
And thine eyes were fixed on His,
While thy guilty lips were printing
On His feet full many a kiss:
And then, wonder of compassion!
In one moment thou wert free,
And a gift of love unequalled
From His Heart came into thee.

"Blessed swiftness of a pardon
Which thy guilt could not delay!
Happy penance of a moment
Burning life-long sins away!
O, those gentle Eyes of Jesus,
And those tender words He said!
O, the value that He places
On the tears that sinners shed!"

# Chapter IX.

BISHOP O'CONNOR AND THE INSTITUTE.

"THE blessed cross of Christ be about us!" was a favorite prayer of Rev. Mother Xavier. Nothing of spiritual importance thrives outside its shadow, and her communities always recall this great mother's words when trials come to them.

The first taste of the cross experienced by the Pittsburg community came in the sickness and death of Sister M. Philomena Reid, one of the generous band who sacrificed all that was dear to them in the world to establish the Sisters of Mercy in the United States.

Reverend Mother and the other Sisters noticed her failing health; but she was one of those active souls, full of energy and enthusiasm, who labor on and on, in God's vineyard, scarcely taking the time to realize that they are suffering from fatigue, or pain, or weakness.

Mother Warde said little; but as she gazed at Sister Philomena's hectic cheeks and feverishly brilliant eyes, she resolved to be reconciled to the early death of one of her most promising subjects.

Reverend Mother called this brave worker from the schoolroom, where she was teaching her class, to be examined by the physician, who found her lungs in a bad condition. She lingered for some time, but was never able to return to her well-loved duty. Her pure soul winged its flight to her Heavenly Spouse, on the Feast of the Holy Angels, 1845.

She had never prayed for her recovery. Her one ejaculation was: "May the most just, most holy, and most adorable Will of God be in all things done, and praised, and forever magnified."

A short distance outside the city lived a wealthy resident who, in 1844, gave the Bishop one hundred and ten acres of land to be used as a site for a boarding-school for young ladies.

Bishop O'Connor considered the establishment of a boarding-school in his diocese, with an academical course of study, to be a necessary work of Mercy. There was no such institution for Catholics in all Pennsylvania at that time, and the expense and embarrassing circumstances attending the placing of children at Georgetown, and other distant academies, in those days of stage-coaching and slow tow-boating, caused fathers and mothers to keep their daughters at home, despite their strong desire to provide for them the educational accomplishments of the Convent graduate.

Reverend Mother took the same view as the Bishop, of the good to accrue from opening an academy for young ladies. Mother McAuley had advised such a school at Carlow, which became a fruitful source of vocations.

Our foundress believed in extensive free schools, where the rich and poor could mingle and be educated together; but she thought there should be one select school in every diocese, for the convenience of the upper and middle classes who desired to place their daughters in private academies, founded on Christian principles, where their training would fit them for the higher social life, and at the same time form their minds and hearts for the discharge of their duty to God, and the observance of His Holy Law. She also felt that the boarding-school would become necessary for the training of young girls wish-

ing to enter religion, saying: "It is from these schools many of our best Sisters have come." Mother McAuley lived only ten years after the establishment of the Institute, and therefore was not able to organize all the good works she had contemplated. But Mother Warde, trained under her pious care, and knowing all her projects for God's greater glory, was anxious to execute the designs she had left unfulfilled. The Bishop called the Sisters together, made them aware of the object of the meeting, and asked for their opinion. Reverend Mother was the only one who took His Lordship's view of the matter. The other Sisters gave their reasons for believing that there was too much need of their services among the poor and sick to undertake so extensive a work, which would call for a large staff of teachers, besides special boarding accommodations for the pupils. The Bishop was pleased with their candor and good sense, but explained, at length, how the select school would be a work of Mercy in accordance with the Rule and spirit of the Order, because from these schools would go forth many well-trained ladies, with a finished education, to impart their knowledge to the working classes.

When the Sisters understood fully that the academy could be made an effective aid to promote the glory of God and salvation of souls, they gave their consent to its establishment. Bishop O'Connor laid the matter of the undertaking of such schools as a work of the Order before the Pope, and received the sanction of the Church. His Lordship transferred the property in Westmoreland County, which Mr. Kuhn had given him, to the Sisters of Mercy; and the building of St. Xavier's Convent and Academy on this beautiful tract of land began at the same time that Mother Warde made the foundation at Youngstown, about two miles distant. At the expiration of two years teachers and pupils removed from Youngstown to the new St. Xavier's on the "Kuhn Farm."

Father Stillinger had been the pastor at Youngstown until 1845, when Father Gallagher of Blairsville exchanged places with him. To the large two-story house which had been the residence of Father Stillinger, Father Gallagher added a kitchen, refectory, and two schoolrooms, and this he placed at the disposal of the Sisters, until the completion of their new building on the Kuhn property. Therefore, through the sacri-

fice of this generous priest — who retired to a log-cabin, that the school for Catholic children might be opened — Reverend Mother was able to make arrangements to commence, in April, 1845, a select school, which she called St. Xavier's Academy, and a free school near by.

The academy opened with fifteen pupils. Before a year had elapsed, there were eighty in the building. When the school was removed to the new St. Xavier's, there were over one hundred, sixteen of this number being Protestants. The free school flourished, and in a few years a fine new brick building was erected to accommodate the little ones, who flocked each day to its cheerful apartments.

Sister M. Josephine Cullen was the first Superior. She commenced with a staff of six religious teachers, but ere long the number had increased to twenty.

The course of study adopted for the Academy was nearly the same as that used by the Sisters in the free schools in Pittsburg, with the addition of some of the higher branches and the languages. In the academies she founded, Rev. Mother Xavier recommended strongly that the French language be carefully taught with abun-

Bishop O'Connor and the Institute 125 dant practice in French conversation, because of its utility as the language of polite society. She gave the Latin language an important place also in the curriculum of studies for our academies, on account of its value as a discipline for the mind.

Near St. Xavier's Academy was built a house for the chaplain and guests, with comfortable apartments for Mr. Kuhn, where he spent the remainder of his life. He had some laughable eccentricities. One of these was a decided tendency to find fault with the school-children, and report their misdemeanors to headquarters. *They* were wont to retaliate by stripping his gooseberry bushes, tying yellow bows on his faithful "Fido's" tail, running through his turnip-field, and hiding his walking-stick.

However full of mischief and ready to tease these children may have been, they never showed the slightest want of deference to the aged gentleman by word or act in his presence, their childish freaks of fun being perpetrated when Mr. Kuhn was engrossed at his prayers, or when he was taking a midday nap.

He was strongly attached to the Sisters, the chaplain, and everything about this beautiful, conventual spot.

Father Gallagher had desired for many years to join a religious Order, but the scarcity of priests for the diocesan work deterred him from fulfilling his desire. Later on in life he joined the Augustinians in Philadelphia, where he did much faithful service in his Master's vineyard, and died a holy death.

In August, 1845, the Bishop accompanied Rev. Mother Warde and Sister M. Xavier Tiernan to Ireland to procure some good postulants for the American Mission. From every side were requests for the Sisters to establish schools, and he considered it a wise project to look for new members, if all the demands for foundations were to be granted. They returned in December with two postulants, Miss O'Gorman and Miss Kelly, graduates of the Ursuline Convent in Cork, besides three professed Sisters, Sister M. Anastasia, Sister M. Gertrude, Sister M. Augustine, all won to the Lord's vineyard in fair Columbia's land by the eloquent pleadings of Mother Xavier for helpers to plant the good seed in the hearts of the multitudes, waiting for the consoling voice and the enlightening word.

St. Xavier's Academy was an institution dear

to the Bishop's heart, and he entered largely into every plan that had in view its further advancement. He took pride in bringing prelates, priests, and other eminent persons to visit the convent, schools, and different institutions of the Sisters. He examined the pupils frequently, and gave the Sisters and children treats of general information from his well-stored mind. Every little child, every youth, and every maiden in Pittsburg and the surrounding country was known and cared for by His Lordship, and they loved him dearly in return.

His visits brought gladness to every member of St. Xavier's Academy. In "Leaves from the Annals" we catch glimpses of his delightful character, as the old pupils described him in their letters, long years after they had been graduated from their loved Alma Mater. In an extract from one letter we read: "His grand presence was inspiring, and lent a charm that stimulated to higher purposes."

From another we quote: "The character of our Bishop was a wonderful combination of powerful intellect and exquisite tenderness. I have the most touching memories of his wise counsel and fatherly affection in my joys and

sorrows. As an illustration of his humility and delicate consideration for others, I recall that Mr. —— and I, with our little ones, drove out Fourth Street one Fourth of July. In front of us was the Bishop's modest turnout, which had room only for himself and the driver. Presently he spied his cook, Mary Moran, trudging along in the heat and dust, carrying a heavy basket. Suddenly His Lordship orders a halt, steps down and makes Mary take his place, saying he preferred walking."

His simplicity of manner and his genuine sincerity endeared him to every man and woman in his diocese, but especially to the young. Greatness bespeaks simplicity, and nowhere do we find a truer proof of such than in this great man of God, whose learning and eloquence adorned the See he so wisely filled, but whose life was as simple and self-denying as that of the poorest religious.

The following words from an old boarder at St. Xavier's, written in the *Annals*, gives an insight into his love for the poor:

"When I took leave of him he slipped into my hand, with the embarrassed air of one fearing to have it noticed, a ten-dollar bill 'for Ellen

# Bishop O'Connor and the Institute 129

C——,' whom you remember as very poor and very holy." "He was literally afraid of letting his left hand know what his right hand did."

Father McCullagh was the first chaplain at St. Xavier's. He took a great interest in the school, the religious, and the pupils. All remember with gratitude his edifying life and spiritual exhortations.

Bishop O'Connor established the Benedictine monks in Father Gallagher's house when the Sisters removed to their new convent. In time, as English-speaking Fathers were counted among their numbers, they became the chaplains at St. Xavier's, and continue to fill that office at the present day. "The Abbot has been a true father" to the Sisters of Mercy, and in every way have these self-sacrificing monks aided and protected the community by their kindness.

The congregation in charge of the orphanage withdrew in 1845, on account of a pressing need in what was considered a more necessary field of labor. The Sisters of Mercy were appointed to take charge of the orphans.

A new hospital was in course of erection, but when the epidemic of typhus ("ship-fever") broke out in 1847, the Sisters opened a tempo-

rary hospital. It was soon occupied by typhus patients, and sick, broken-down soldiers returning from the Mexican War. In May, 1848, Sisters and patients took up their abode in the new building. The first medical staff consisted of Drs. McNeal, Gazzin, Bruce, and Addison.

The present hospital of the Sisters of Mercy in Pittsburg accommodates one hundred and fifty patients.

On account of the emigration from Ireland in 1848, the school attendance was doubled; the visitation became extensive; and the hospital work increased from the number of patients arriving with "ship-fever." Night and day the Sisters did their duty diligently in the deadly typhus wards, comforting the dying and winning souls to God. Five choir Sisters and three lay Sisters caught the disease in their ministrations, and "died martyrs of charity."

Mother Warde became so broken down in health from her constant attention to the sick and dying that Dr. Addison ordered her to leave the hospital at once. Sister Xavier Tiernan, then Mistress of Novices, left her duties in the Novitiate to aid in the hospital work. She labored in a close ward, consoling and encouraging

Bishop O'Connor and the Institute 131 the poor victims with heavenly hopes, until she sank exhausted.

It was Reverend Mother's cross not to be allowed to assist this dying religious, — her first subject in America, and a hidden saint, — so serious was her own condition at this time. "Heroes such as these pass silently through life, and *fame* never reaches them." They saw death before them, but they feared not its terrors, so long as there was a pain to be relieved or a soul to be saved.

No danger daunted the hearts of the devoted Bishop and his clergy. They stood by the bedsides of the dying and the dead. They administered the last rites of the Church, and sent hundreds of souls penitent to the feet of their Saviour and Judge. God seemed to keep His protecting arms about them and saved them from the deadly contagion. In 1850, the Sisters in Pittsburg took up their abode in their new convent just finished on Webster Avenue. This still continues to be the Parent House of the diocese. A home for working women and a chapel has been built near the convent, together with a free school and an academy.

Pittsburg, with its many industries and enter-

prises, has been aptly called the "American Workshop." With the different works of Mercy, the community became a veritable religious "workshop." Yet a beautiful spirit of helpfulness and cheerfulness reigned supreme, and the most laborious tasks seemed light, because "love thinketh not of labors, would willingly do more than it can — feeleth no burden, complaineth not of impossibility. It can achieve anything; when weary is not tired; when straitened is not constrained; but like a vivid flame and a burning torch, it mounteth upwards, and securely passeth through all."

# Chapter X.

FOUNDATION OF THE ORDER IN CHICAGO.

REV. FATHER QUARTER, the Bishopelect of the newly formed diocese of Chicago, was one of the group of eminent divines who stepped forward to welcome Rev. Mother Xavier Warde and her associate Sisters, when they first set foot on American soil.

In the same breath with his words of greeting he invited Reverend Mother to plant the Order in what was to become the "Garden City of the West,"—the Great Lake metropolis, with an area surpassing any other city in the world, then little less than a vast prairie-land, dotted with rough, board cottages, or pioneer log-cabins. The Bishop would admit of no refusal and of no delay. He kept urging his request for the next three years, until, finally, Reverend Mother acquiesced in the summer of 1846.

She selected six religious for the foundation, with Sister M. Agatha O'Brien for the Superior.

Accompanied by the Very Rev. William Quarter, the Bishop's brother, they commenced their journey on September 19.

By river and by lake, through the wilderness, where the autumn leaves were tinged with scarlet, over prairie-land decorated with wild asters and golden-rod mingling with the meadow-grass, the little party made their way. They sailed up the Ohio to Beaver, then chartered a stage to Poland, Ohio. From here they continued their journey by stage to Cleveland, where they remained until Sunday evening to observe the Lord's Day.

Then they went on board the *Oregon*, intending to go the rest of the way by water.

In this they were disappointed, being obliged to leave the boat at Detroit, as there was no room for them on board. Other passengers had bought their tickets before the Sisters; therefore "First come, first served," left the Chicago foundresses waiting on the shore, where the sparkling current of the Detroit River stoops down to mingle with the serene and peaceful waters of Lake St. Clair, resting, like a tiny crystal setting, between the broad, silvery expanses of Lake Erie and Lake Huron. The courteous Bishop Lefevre of De-

When Reverend Mother related this experience in after years, she always finished her narrative with "God *love* the good Bishop Lefevre."

On Tuesday they journeyed by stage to Kalamazoo, thence to St. Joseph, where they took passage on the steamer Sam Ward, bound for Chicago. After sailing a night and a day on the lovely waters of Lake Michigan they reached their destination on September 24, the feast of Our Lady of Mercy.

The Bishop's "palace," a small, miserable cottage at the corner of Michigan and Madison Avenues, was given by him for a convent.

He took up his residence with Father McElhearne, the rector, in a wretched hovel near the Cathedral. On their arrival the little party, accompanied by the Bishop, went to the Church to thank God for their safe journey, and to ask His blessing on the religious enterprise they were about to undertake.

The great desire of His Lordship's heart was to have the children of his flock taught by religious, and the poor and sick, who stood in so much need of consolation in their miseries, consoled by the presence and sympathy of those consecrated to God for the especial service of the lonely and the sorrowful.

The dawn of this day was breaking for him, but when he saw these delicate ladies enter the rough shanty he had vacated for their use, he regretted his persistency in asking religious to brave the hardships, poverty, and danger they must encounter in this wild region where only a few years before "the painted savage had yelled his war-whoop."

It was late that night before the Sisters had arranged a little chapel in their modest dwelling, but the next morning would bring the Bishop with Our Dear Lord to dwell with them on the lowly altar which their own hands had fashioned.

Their little apartments were made of roughest timber, but beneath its roof they had Our Lord, and having Him they had *all* they desired.

They saw God's work to be done. Would they turn back or become disheartened? That was

She urged on the Sisters, by word and by example, to take up each duty, each difficult task, cheerfully and patiently, performing it little by little as if it were the only hard thing they would ever be called on to do.

Thus was each work taken up and accomplished. Every effort was used and quiet patience exercised, until their loving perseverance in noiselessly spreading the Kingdom of Christ in these Western Wilds was blessed by God with a success never dreamed of by the first group of toilers in the Master's vineyard.

Reverend Mother inspired them with courage and confidence as she worked on, a living example of strength in weakness for those who lean upon the strong arm of the Almighty—an Arm which is never shortened, never withdraws itself so long as we admit our own littleness and rely on God's All-powerful help.

She and her companions blessed their Divine Spouse for being allowed the privilege of suffering the effects of holy poverty in the extension of good works which, with her prophetic eye, she discerned would enlarge and spread in the

years to come beyond the most sanguine expectations. She was right; religion has grown in Chicago with the same vast proportions as the temporal importance of the city.

Aye, far, far beyond. For one day "Father Time" will destroy the giant steel-mill, and the gigantic rolling-mill, with the miles of business blocks and all the industry, prosperity, beauty, and power surrounding them.

But the immortal results of Christian education, with all the religious activities in the Church of God, will rise higher and higher, penetrating even unto the everlasting mansions of Heaven where "the rust will not consume, nor time destroy."

When the Sisters went to Chicago, in 1846, it was a small "wooden city" with about fifteen thousand inhabitants. Now it is a city of massive brick and stone structures, many of its buildings being twelve and fourteen, and even twenty stories high. Its population has increased to over a million and a half.

After Mass and breakfast on the morning following their arrival, the Bishop heard, as he spoke with Rev. Mother Xavier, the joyous laugh of the Sisters through the cracks in the

Foundation of the Order in Chicago 139 rough deal boards which separated the parlor from the community-room.

This put an end to the terrible anxiety of mind that had caused him to pass a sleepless night regretting the act of bringing nuns into such crude and uncivilized surroundings. He knew such merry notes of mirth could not come from dejected or distrustful hearts.

What matter if often the young community had to depend on the early settlers for their daily sustenance? They knew God would provide for His own. How well His promise of never disappointing those who put their trust in Him has been kept, let the grand institutions of the Sisters of Mercy in Chicago to-day attest.

Reverend Mother worked unceasingly during her months in Chicago, both in the organization of a well-ordered community, and in the auspicious opening of schools, instruction classes, and visitation of the sick poor. In her own instruction class she had several Indians, who called her the "pale face mother," and reverenced her as a being dropped down from the heavens.

At one end of their shanty-convent stood a dilapidated frame building. This, Reverend Mother and the Sisters arranged and beautified

inside, with the help of the Bishop's private purse, until it was, perhaps, the prettiest and best equipped school building on the shores of Lake Michigan, when, soon after their arrival, it opened its door to the precocious children of the West.

As Divine Providence would have it, nearly all the Chicago foundresses were possessed of much ingenuity and energy, with artistic tastes and abilities. These qualifications served them well in the days when they were wont to invent a great deal out of *nothing*.

On parchment, which was sent to Reverend Mother in large supplies by her friends in Ireland, the Sisters sketched maps of the different countries, with geographical plans of study and illustrations annexed, in a series adapted to the different grades of classes. These, when finished in water-colors, were not only artistic, but clear, instructive, and interesting to the mind of the child which drinks in the beautiful long before the undeveloped intellect can penetrate a fact.

For globes they made sphere-frames of willow branches, over which they neatly fastened parchment, sketching distinctly the map-work of the hemispheres, and arranging thereon the

Foundation of the Order in Chicago 141 mechanism of the ordinary school globe. The blackboards were made of planed timber formed in squares, fastened to the wall and then painted in the old-fashioned way of producing blackboard surface.

The Sisters made their own numeral-frames on squares of delicate elm framework, with strings of wire stretched horizontally, on which were strung small spools painted in the primary colors.

The community-room, with its rough board walls, was, during these days, a veritable warehouse of school supplies. In variety and design, to suit all wants, might be seen hand-made maps and charts, solar systems and globes, ball-frames and color plans; squares, cubes, cones, cylinders, and all the necessaries for teaching form; collections of minerals, sponges, coral, etc., and specimens of the vegetable kingdom for object lessons; cardboard, paints, brushes, mucilage, scrapbooks, and other school paraphernalia.

This collection would, no doubt, be very rustic, if placed in comparison with the improved modern apparatus for school use, but its utility was very far-reaching.

It served its purpose for object-teaching, and

that means much, in any age, for the development of the child intellect and the responsible task of training the perceptive powers of the little one.

Among the pupils who flocked to the first schools opened in Chicago, were children of trappers, border-men, hardy settlers, and seafaring men, with their unformed minds and guileless hearts ready to receive every impression of goodness, beauty, and knowledge given by the religious, who were happy beyond measure in their work.

Even these children of tender years seemed to drink in the Western spirit of enterprise with every breath of the expansive prairie atmosphere, for their precocity and sturdiness were marked traits.

Reverend Mother enjoyed the spontaneous vivacity of these bright, matter-of-fact youngsters, and often laughed till the tears ran down her cheeks, as she related droll stories of the unique originality which they evinced on all occasions, even in saying their prayers.

She was much interested in the Indians whom she instructed; and they returned at stated intervals to the "pale face mother" for medals, rosFoundation of the Order in Chicago 143 aries, and gospels, which she distributed freely to the delighted group, after explaining their use.

On one occasion a little Indian girl appeared at the convent, asking to see the "Blackrobe Chief." The portress tried in vain to understand her errand. She finally went to Reverend Mother in her dilemma. Mother Warde went to the parlor, saying to the Sister in her own simple fashion, so well remembered in her convents, "Ask the Holy Spirit to enlighten me to do some good for souls."

When she entered the room the little one ran to her, clung to the ample folds of her habit, exclaiming, "This is the good 'pale face mother'! She get the 'Blackrobe Chief'! My 'fâder' sick, sick, and he beg, beg, for 'Blackrobe,' to show him the kingdom of the Great Spirit." This was spoken by the child in a broken combination of English and Indian phrases, but Mother Warde understood what her errand was, and sent a messenger to the Bishop, who answered her summons at once.

With the little girl at his side leading the way, His Lordship, true disciple of the meek and gentle Master, wended his way to the wigwam,

where he found a dying Indian. He soothed and comforted him as best as he could, then went out, returning in a short time with an Indian who spoke English and acted as interpreter while the sick Indian made his confession to the Bishop. The last rites of the Church were administered to the poor "red man," and his desire of being fortified for his passage to eternity by the Holy Viaticum was satisfied.

After being absent for some months, Mother Warde was recalled to Pittsburg, to the deep regret of her dear Chicago Sisters whom she was never to meet again until the blessed reunion in Heaven. The evening before her departure she gave them a parting exhortation, dwelling especially on the spirit of poverty, love of the poor, and the faithful practice of the small acts of virtue. She explained that the soul which possessed poverty of spirit would also be imbued with charity, — the Queen of the Virtues, — because the truly poor in spirit have no ambitions, no personal interests, no opposite wills to clash. All these are buried in the Will of God. They employ wealth, talent, influence, success, to advance God's greater honor and glory, but use them as if they possessed them not, and never to

Foundation of the Order in Chicago gratify self-love. Here she told the story of St. Francis de Sales living in a sumptuous palace with luxurious rooms where he received visitors. A narrow, dingy apartment, divested of every form of comfort, he set aside for himself. Here he lived and prayed, wrote and studied. The beautiful drawing-rooms he called the "Bishop's," the poverty-stricken apartment he named "Francis' quarters." She also quoted St. Charles Borromeo, who lived in a magnificent castle as Cardinal Borromeo, but who had a poor, wretched room in the attic reserved for himself, where he slept on straw, and to which he withdrew to spend long hours in prayer and holy contemplation. The richly furnished apartments he designated "the Cardinal's suite," the attic-room the "headquarters of Charles."

The humble, every-day virtues, those fragrant little violets that bloom unseen in some shady nook and shed their odor at the foot of the cross, were held up by Reverend Mother as the precious adornments of the piety of religious women.

"Our Blessed Master and Model," she would say, "has left us a proof of how he esteemed the small, hidden acts that are never tarnished by the applause of men, when He gave His first

lesson to Christians, saying, 'Learn of Me, because I am meek and humble of heart.'

"'The cup of cold water,' the kind word, the gentle look of sympathy, the patient bearing of annoyances from those with whom we come in contact, forbearance with defects of character: the suffering silently some trifling insult, some humiliation, some slight injustice; ceding our rights complacently to others, a soft reply to a harsh word, receiving gracefully and goodnaturedly a refusal or a rebuke; an acknowledgment of small favors, a disregard of any want of due appreciation, looking for no return from any save God alone; and such unostentatious practices constitute true sanctity. They make piety agreeable and lovable. Persons who fail to practise these little virtues may repel others by their ungraciousness, or put them to inconvenience by their obtrusiveness."

On a cold winter's morning, with the sleet and snow beating down from the heavens, after Mass and Holy Communion, leaving her spiritual daughters in tears at her departure, this brave Superior left Chicago on her homeward journey to Pittsburg, which with the dispensation and approval of Bishop Quarter and Bishop O'Connor, Foundation of the Order in Chicago 147 she determined to make alone in order to save the other Sisters the terrible fatigue, inconvenience, and exposure, such a journey entailed in those days.

The lakes and rivers being frozen, she was obliged to make most of the trip over prairie and wilderness in a kind of stage-wagon full of rough-looking men. She was placed in a little apartment kept for the mail-bags, and here she remained for two days and two nights without food or drink, the Sisters, in their grief, having quite forgotten the small basket of refreshments prepared for her journey.

In a muff which a kindly woman slipped into her hand, when she was entering the stage-coach, she placed her spiritual books. In her Office, prayer-book, New Testament, and Imitation of Christ, she found food for her soul, and courage for her weary, hungry body.

The first part of the journey was made with horses; but in the wilderness the wagon was drawn by oxen through thick, black mud and quagmire, which flew up, bespattering the passengers. Those who remember the dignified, religious Mother, always the perfection of neatness, can imagine her sufferings in this plight.

By a supreme act of her iron will she never closed her eyes for one moment during these perilous nights and days.

At night she listened to the heavy breathing of the slumbering passengers, and the screech of the prairie chicken, in the mysterious, terrible solitude surrounding her, while she said her rosary, or meditated on the loneliness of the Loving Master praying in the Garden of Olives, and crossing the brook Cedron to a continuance of His Passion.

How she longed for the face of a religious companion in the stillness of that vast desert during those long, frosty nights of winter, as the silvery moon shed its pale light on the crisp, ashen prairie-land stretching to meet the dark horizon which bounded her view!

Despite the awfulness of her situation, Reverend Mother noted all the wild splendor of this trackless region, and, in relating the story of her journey, was wont to dwell on the grandeur of the natural features of the forests and the plains.

On the third day she reached Toledo, then a city with two thousand inhabitants, a respectable hotel, a bank, and many good buildings, but without streets, the different places in its precincts

Foundation of the Order in Chicago 149 being reached by foot-paths and wagon roads. It was the time of "Know-Nothingism" in the United States, and of necessity, religious were obliged to don the secular dress in travelling to escape observation.

When Mother Warde entered the hotel at Toledo, the first one she met was none other than a large-hearted Irish woman, who immediately recognized her as a religious through the disguise of her secular garb.

This poor servant-girl, full of the grand, old faith and piety so refreshing to come in contact with, stopped at no ordinary limit in the bestowal of kindness on our famished, travel-stained Mother.

She hired a coach to bring her to Church on the next morning after her arrival. The wind was blowing fiercely and the drifting snow made hillocks around Reverend Mother as she stepped into the coach; but to Mass and the Sacraments she desired to go in the face of every difficulty. After going some distance the stage stopped, and as the author of the *Annals* adroitly puts it, "Neither bribes nor coaxing — and there never was a woman who could coax better than our Mother — could induce the driver to go farther."

She walked the remainder of the way through blinding snow and high piled drifts until she reached the church. She heard the Holy Mass and received her Lord in the Blessed Eucharist, which filled her soul with such peace and holy joy as to cause her to forget every hardship. Father De Goesbriand, afterward Bishop of Burlington, Vt., happened to be the officiating priest. He recognized her as a religious, and invited her to his house near the church, where she received every mark of respect and kindness.

She left Toledo in a "rickety" stage-coach, which "broke down" after going ten miles on the journey. The driver ordered every passenger, except the Reverend Mother, to vacate the stage. The men were obliged to carry logs from the wood near by to raise the wheels out of the rut. It took them two hours to extricate the stage from the mud, and two more to put it in running order.

After many hours of cold, weary riding, they reached Sandusky City, then a bleak, desolate spot, without a sign to foreshadow the prosperous city of to-day.

Mother Warde would not venture into the hotel in Sandusky, but made use of a rough

Foundation of the Order in Chicago 151 basin filled with water from the watering-trough, to make her hasty toilet. She reseated herself in the stage and waited there until it started again, after a delay of several hours. During the night that followed their departure from Sandusky the stage was "swamped," and the men were obliged to get two yoke of oxen from a farm-house to draw the stage-coach from the rut.

The man who owned the oxen was very angry at leaving his bed to engage in such service, and cursed vehemently while he worked at releasing the stage. When all was clear once more, he said to Reverend Mother, "Lady, were you not afraid of being killed when your carriage fell?" "No," she replied, "but when you wickedly profaned the Holy Name of God I feared some terrible punishment would come upon us all, on account of your profanity. See that you do not rouse the anger of God by such blasphemy again." When they had gone some distance farther they came to a steep hill above a deep ravine. Here an iron bar fell from the roof of the wagon on Reverend Mother's head, stunning her for the moment. The driver, intent on guiding the horses, while the men held back the coach to

save it from falling into the ravine, heeded not Mother Warde's accident, but explained afterward, "Your life and mine depended on getting safely down that hill."

They reached Brownsville toward evening, and Reverend Mother went on board the boat which set sail at midnight for Pittsburg, where she landed safely at an early hour next day. Through the darkness of a cold rainy morning in the midst of winter, she reached the convent. In the twinkling of an eye, the Sisters were gathered about her, removing her garments, saturated with water and mud. She was in a state of utter collapse. They put her to bed and gave her nourishment; but not even a drop of water would remain on her stomach.

Dr. Addison was called, and found her in a serious condition. She remained in this critical state for nearly ten days, when she commenced to recover.

This experience called for heroic bravery, and if God had not fortified her to be a pioneer of Christian Education, and a foundress of convents, in a missionary country, her weak woman's endurance would not have withstood its hardships, nor her womanly courage dared its dangers.

## Chapter XI.

"THE APOSTLE OF THE ALLEGHANIES."
LORETTO.

IGH up in the Alleghanies, in Cambria County, Penn., some two hundred and fifty miles from Philadelphia, is a Catholic colony, purchased in 1803 by Father Gallitzin, the Prince-priest, and laid out by him in farms which he sold to emigrants for a trifle, or, more frequently, bestowed on them gratis. erected saw-mills, grist-mills, and a little church for his people. He colonized this village with the sum of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars, and called it Loretto. This money was given him by his relatives in Russia, the King of Holland, and the Russian Ambassador at Washington (in lieu of the immense patrimony which he renounced to become a Roman Catholic and a priest).

The "Apostle of the Alleghanies" was the son of a Russian ambassador of the princely family

Gallitzin, whose members have made themselves famous as soldiers, statesmen, and authors.

His mother was the daughter of Count Schmettau. She was born in Berlin, but it is probable that she met Prince Gallitzin at Aix la Chapelle, and in time became his wife.

She was very attractive, and much famed for her literary ability. Her husband was the bosom friend of Voltaire and Diderot, as well as a staunch champion of their principles. The Countess, too, seems to have shared in the atheistic inclinations of her husband.

We read of her being the centre of a group of authors — Goethe being one of those who enjoyed her charming hospitality and accomplishments. In 1785, Hemsterhuys addressed to her his "Lettre sur l'athéisme."

When her son was a lad of about fifteen, she became a Catholic, and by her edifying example attracted Count Frederic Stolberg to the Church.

Demetrius Augustine became a Catholic in his seventeenth year, and later was made aidede-camp to the Austrian General who commanded the forces of that country at Brabant.

The young prince, educated for the army, perfect in every branch of secular learning and

courtly accomplishments, was, nevertheless, unsatisfied. Like St. Augustine, his heart craved something more than the splendor of courts or the luxurious pleasures of honor and affluence. "Thou hast made me for Thyself, O Lord, and my heart cannot rest till it rests in Thee!" were the words from the writings of that wonderful protégé of a mother's prayers, which became the "Quid prodest" of Demetrius; but, like the young man in the gospel, in heeding these whisperings of Divine Grace, "he must leave all" to follow the Master. This meant much sacrifice. How could he leave lands, emoluments, and titles? So true it is, as has been prettily expressed in a poem familiar to nearly every Catholic: -

"You may be near the Kingdom, nearer than any know, And Jesus may love and pity, and yet, He may let you go."

But none are let go who are faithful to the lights and graces given them. When the Good God permits us to turn away from Him, it is our own fault. We accept not His loving call. However, Prince Gallitzin was not one of the cowardly souls who fear the self-denial of being a disciple of the Perfect Master.

He dashed aside all hesitating ponderings. He rushed to the front, in one great act of generosity to God, leaving titles, estates, friends, and attendants; sailed for America; entered the Theological seminary of the Sulpicians, and became a priest of the Most High, being ordained by Bishop Carroll in 1795.

He called himself "Father Smith" to disguise the nobility of his birth. He labored incessantly in attending to the spiritual necessities of the inhabitants of the colony he planted, and the extensive region surrounding it.

His poor log-cabin home was ever open to the destitute and the wayfarer.

Despite his indefatigable activity in his priestly ministrations, he found time to write several books. One of these, "Defence of Catholic Principles," is yet in print.

There is an account in Shea's History of the Church in the United States, of Bishop Egan, first Bishop of Philadelphia, making his visitation through Pennsylvania, being heartily welcomed by Father Gallitzin at Loretto, where he confirmed one hundred and eighty-five children. We read from the same source that the Bishop was very ill in health, but "the good effected by

When Father Gallitzin went to labor in this mountain region, he found twelve Catholics. When he died, in 1840, he left six thousand in Loretto, besides the large population of the mountain-sides and valleys outside the vicinity of the village.

Three years after the death of this devoted priest who had so longed to plant an Order of religious teachers in his parish, Bishop O'Connor, in bringing the Sisters to Pittsburg, travelled over Prince Gallitzin's domain.

Here he told Rev. Mother Warde of the instructions he had received from Father Gallitzin, before his death, to bring Sisters to educate his dear little mountaineers; and, standing there on the summit of the Alleghanies, His Lordship exacted a promise from Reverend Mother to send, at her first opportunity, a branch of her pioneer community to labor in the colony of the Princepriest. Her promise was fully redeemed in 1848, when she founded a branch house at Loretto, and placed in charge the zealous Sister M. Catherine Wynne.

Captain McGuire, the first white man who settled in Cambria County, gave Bishop Carroll four hundred acres of land, somewhere about the year 1790, for the use of the Church. On a part of this land the present convent stands "in the midst of spacious grounds set out with evergreens," and surrounded by reminiscences of the "Apostle of the Alleghanies." Adjoining the convent grounds are the ruins of Father Gallitzin's chapel, and the room where he wrote his works of controversy. Also the "wooden" church built by him, where Mother Warde and the first religious knelt to worship God, with their simple mountain children.

Here, in the Sanctuary of the church, in 1893, was laid to rest the remains of Sylvester Warde, a promising young journalist, the grandson of Reverend Mother's dearly-loved brother John, whom we have referred to before as the companion of her childhood days.

Mother Warde did much in organizing the Works of Mercy entailed by our Rule; but her greatest delight was in seeing her Sisters engaged in the education of youth. She considered this the most apostolical of all good works.

"What work so Godlike," she would repeat,

"as the care of the development of these young intellects, and the cultivation of their pure hearts, by planting deep within them the germs of virtue and piety."

Her warm, motherly heart went out to the little children, and wherever she appeared on the playgrounds she was surrounded by troops of the little ones, who loved her dearly, and whom she would pat on the cheek, or stroke on the hair, with a pleasant smile or caressing word for each.

Her ideal of the religious teacher was high, and she required the Sisters to reach a high standard of excellence in the schoolroom.

She impressed each Sister with the fact, that the teacher was the Angel of the children under her charge, the keeper of their innocent hearts, into which she must infuse a love for virtue and the practices of our holy religion, so as to guide them to their eternal home, — ever sowing the good seed that in so many cases seems to perish where it falls, but which will spring up some day, in the far-off future, to rejoice the Sacred Heart of the Divine Teacher. "Whosoever shall receive one such child as this, in My Name, receiveth Me," were the words of Our Lord to those

who showed displeasure in beholding Him set so much importance on the "little ones," whom He took on His knee, and blessed and caressed, whilst the *great* and *wise*, the lords of creation, were forced to stand and wait.

Reverend Mother insisted upon the Sisters cultivating a spirit of prayer and recollection. She often said, "If the religious teacher is not thoroughly imbued with a burning love of God, how can she cultivate virtue in the children?"

"One thing at a time, and everything performed in its own time," was her constant precept. There was a period for study and a period for prayer.

She would not allow one moment taken from the spiritual exercises, for the active duties; nor one moment from the time prescribed for active duties, for prayer.

Extra preparations for class, or extra periods of devotion had to be put aside for the *free time* marked on the day's programme.

At the present day, the Sisters of the Pittsburg community teach over six thousand children, having under their charge some of the finest academies and free schools in the country. During the Civil War, Sisters of Mercy from Pittsburg, Chicago, and other localities went to the scene of bloodshed to care for the wounded and dying. They had charge of the Jefferson City, Stanton, and Douglas military hospitals.

Bishop O'Connor remained the firm friend of Rev. Mother Warde and the convents she founded to the last day of his life.

In 1860, he resigned his well-appointed, Episcopal See, and became a member of the Society of Jesus.

His life as a Jesuit was as religious and unassuming as might be expected from such a magnanimous servant of God.

It is related that no one in the novitiate, except the Superior, knew he was a bishop before his entrance into the Order, until one morning, while saying Mass, he turned after the *Gloria*, and, to his own utter discomfiture, in a moment of forgetfulness, said the "Pax vobis" of Bishops.

The droll ones among the novices, who had found considerable matter for mirth on witnessing the aged priest assume the same duties and mode of life as the other members of the novitiate (many of whom were scarcely grown from boyhood) felt somewhat abashed when

162 Rev. Mother M. Xavier Warde they recognized that they had been exercising their wit on a Bishop.

As a Jesuit, Bishop O'Connor came several times to Pittsburg, and on one occasion he visited Manchester, much to the delight of Mother Warde and her community.

# Chapter XII.

#### EARLY DAYS IN PROVIDENCE.

DOCTOR TYLER, nephew of the celebrated convert, Virgil Barber, was first Bishop of the diocese of Hartford, which, up to 1872, included Rhode Island and Connecticut.

At the time of Bishop Tyler's consecration in 1844, there were only six priests and ten thousand Catholics in the two States.

Bishop Tyler died in June, 1849, and Rt. Rev. Bernard O'Reilly was consecrated second Bishop of Hartford in 1850.

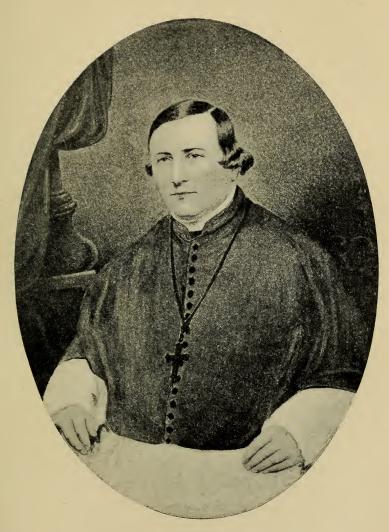
His first undertaking was to provide Catholic education for the youth of his diocese, and accordingly negotiated with Bishop O'Connor for Sisters of Mercy to establish schools in Providence. He stipulated that the religious chosen to take charge of this foundation should be a woman of prayer, tact, and good judgment, for bigotry was rife in Providence at that time, and

it was expected that she and her community would be exposed to some degree of persecution.

After much reflection and prayer, the Superiors decided that Mother Xavier Warde, who had made so many foundations with remarkable wisdom and success, should be appointed to establish the Order in New England.

To her able and pious management in this field of labor may be attributed, with the blessing of God, the rooting out of prejudice, which had clouded the minds and misled the judgments of otherwise upright people.

The Sisters who made the Providence foundation were Rev. Mother Xavier Warde, Sister M. Paula Lombard, Sister M. Camillus O'Neal, Sister M. Josephine Lombard, and Sister M. Joanna Fogarty. At the commencement of March, 1851, one evening at twilight, the little party, accompanied by the Very Rev. James O'Connor, in after years Bishop of Omaha, Neb., left St. Xavier's to take the stage for Philadelphia. Bishop O'Connor and all the Sisters, together with the senior pupils, escorted them through the forest path, a fifteen minutes' walk, to the "turnpike road," where the stage-coach awaited them. It had been an old practice at



The Rt. Rev. Bernard O'Reilly, D.D.



St. Xavier's for the Sisters and older pupils to go to the "pike" (where the stage stopped) to meet Mother Warde when she came from Pittsburg, and to accompany her to the same spot on her return.

Never did this woodland path witness so mournful an outgoing from St. Xavier's. Many tears were shed by the Sisters and pupils, as well as by Reverend Mother and her zealous missionary band. After affectionate adieux, the stage started, and the Bishop, Sisters, and pupils returned to St. Xavier's in tears and silence.

The foundation was made in Providence on March 12, the feast of the Translation of the relics of St. Francis Xavier.

With this date may be associated the first appearance of the habit of the Sisters of Mercy in New England.

The house in which they resided for a short time after their arrival was a little cottage on Weybosset (then High) Street. It was an extremely poor abode, without any provision for comfort or convenience. The bare necessaries of life were all the community possessed, and yet there was not sufficient accommodation for all the candidates who applied for admission. Even

before the August Retreat of 1851, the members numbered twenty.

Only brave, prayerful women could cope with the trials awaiting the first Sisterhood in Providence, but Mother Warde's unbounded confidence in the protection and blessing of Almighty God kept her cheerful and patient in the face of the most discouraging events. "We have seen her," wrote one of the old religious, "when the windows were all broken in the humble little cottage on High Street, from the intolerant attacks of the 'Know-Nothing' element, appear perfectly calm and unruffled, as she said, in her rich, soft tones, which would raise the spirits of the most down-hearted, 'Oh, that is nothing at all, my child. Those persons have the best of motives, but their judgments are clouded from prejudice. All that will pass away, and a year hence, I am sure, our persecutors will have seen the folly of such actions, and as they learn the truth they will become very friendly. The majority of men desire to be just, if their minds are broad enough to discern the right."

Reverend Mother's words proved true, for when the Sisters and their works became known, the same persons who had persecuted them proved their warmest, truest friends. Often, in later years, they laughed heartily over the unreasonable ideas they had of religious before making their acquaintance.

Bishop O'Reilly and his loyal clergy were untiring in their interest and kindness toward Mother Warde and her community, but on account of existing circumstances they had to act with prudence in the introduction of religious education into a province where, a few years before, the Ursulines had seen the convent demolished over their heads.

During the summer of 1851, the Bishop bought from Mr. Stead a fine stone house at the corner of Broad and Claverick Streets. This was fitted up for a convent, while a frame house on an adjoining lot was remodelled for an Orphans' Home.

The Sisters removed to their new convent in October, and Reverend Mother commenced preparations at once for the opening of the orphanage. Some free schools were already opened, and as her teaching staff increased, she opened more of these schools in different parts of the city, until there was ample provision made for the free Christian education of the Catholic children of Providence.

Her next step was to open an academy, which was successful beyond the most sanguine expectations; for Catholics and non-Catholics alike crowded to its portals, despite the bad feeling that existed against the "nuns," which, however, thank God, disappeared in a very few years.

No doubt the sudden change in popular sentiment may be largely attributed to the non-Catholic pupils of this academy, who found the "nuns" teachers of superior refinement, intellectual, accomplished, and devoted to their profession, desirous only of imparting a thorough education to the pupils under their care.

These conclusions were transmitted by the pupils to their parents, who never regretted placing their daughters in the Academy, but on the contrary, were delighted with their progress in study, good manners, and the social requirements of life. Thus through their children did the people discover the real condition of things, and become willing to accept the truth, when the barriers of prejudice were removed, — which, however, did not occur until after the attempted "Know-Nothing" attack of March 22, 1855. This unpleasant event the Sisters desire to forget, and we only refer to it as an instance

of Reverend Mother's wonderful self-control, and in order to pay tribute to the loyal-hearted Catholics, who proved themselves willing to defend the religious at the risk of their own lives.

Mother Warde's quiet dignity and religious bearing throughout this incident had a controlling power that might not have been attained by military force. Some days before the mob appeared, the Mayor of the city, Mr. Knowles, called on Reverend Mother, and requested her to depart with her religious from the city, as ten thousand "Know-Nothings" from different parts of New England were to arrive on a certain evening to demolish the convent.

Reverend Mother, with a quiet air and gentle ease, made answer to this astounding threat: "Your honor, we have disregarded no duty, nor responsibility of good citizenship. As a body of religious women we are laboring here in our own sphere. Have we given any provocation for this interference? Will Christian men constitute a mob against unoffending women? Are our rights as citizens not to be protected?"

The mayor replied that he could not control the uprising, and the only means of safety for the Sisters lay in flight.

Mother Warde turned graciously to the perplexed official, and, in dignified tones (with, perhaps, just the slightest flavor of gentle sarcasm), replied, "If I were Chief Executive of municipal affairs, I would know how to control the populace." With her strength of character, and calm, honest purpose, she certainly could have ruled a kingdom, and did not understand the vacillating attitude of the Mayor shirking the unpleasant performance of his duty. His Honor still urged the departure of the Sisters from Providence; but Reverend Mother gently affirmed, "We will remain in our house, and, if needs be, die rather than fly from the field of duty wherein God has placed us."

During this crisis of affairs, she seemed more calm and peaceful in her whole manner than ever before; so certain it is that "true virtue shows its mettle amid trials and contradictions." She spent long hours before the Blessed Sacrament, and from the King of kings she asked and received help in the day of trouble.

On an eventful evening, shortly after the Mayor's interview, the mob surrounded the convent. As the rioters made their way up the street, the Catholic men of Providence, well

armed, took up their places, rank and file, in the Sisters' garden. Perfect quiet reigned within the convent. The novices knew nothing of what was going on without. They enjoyed their evening recreation as usual, said their night prayers, and retired. The older Sisters remained on guard before the Blessed Sacrament. A few assisted Reverend Mother, who, with the utmost self-control, quietly made her way through the ranks of men within the convent enclosure, and exacted from each a promise that no fire-arm should be raised, nor offence given, unless they were called on to do so in self-defence.

The rioters noted the calm dignity and self-composure of the revered Mother as they drew up in line before the convent; and one was overheard remarking to his colleagues on either side, "We made our plans without reckoning the odds we will have to contend with in the strong controlling force the presence of that nun commands. The only honorable course for us to follow is to retreat from this ill-conceived fray. I, for one, will not lift a hand to harm these ladies." But the mob hissed and hooted at these words, and threatened the Sisters with death if they did not leave their convent. At this

juncture, the Bishop and Mr. Stead, the former owner of the convent, appeared on the front entrance. Mr. Stead, with the courage of a Spartan and the serenity of a saint, addressed the mob in the following words: "The first shot fired at this house will go through my body. Let me tell you there is a strong force of brave Irishmen, well armed, within the enclosure of the garden walls. If you dare to attack the convent or the religious, they will defend them with their hearts' blood."

The Bishop then came forward, and said, in grave, clear tones, "My dear friends, in God's name, let not this city, nor the free institutions of this republic be tarnished by any dastardly uplifting of your arms against those who have wrought you no harm, but whose blameless lives are their sure defence before God and man. Depart in peace to your homes, and sully not your honor in act so vile."

As the Bishop finished speaking, the mob withdrew in peaceful detachments, and thus ended this uprising of bigotry in that fair city which can boast to-day of some of the finest Catholic institutions in the country. Mother Warde was called to other fields of labor in after

years, but she kept up a lively interest in Providence, and loved the beautiful old town until her dying day. Catholics and non-Catholics have aided the Sisters to carry on their different works of Mercy for the welfare of humanity.

It is related of the rioter who had the courage of his convictions, and spoke out with honesty, when he realized the wrong in his intended action, that he afterwards enlisted in the Civil War, and being wounded in battle was nursed by the Sisters of Mercy in Jefferson City Military Hospital. He made himself known to them, saying that on the night of the attempt to mob the convent in Providence, he was so impressed by Reverend Mother's religious bearing and unflinching loyalty to what she considered the duty God desired her to perform, and with Bishop O'Reilly's Christ-like spirit of forbearance in the peaceful words he uttered in the face of outrageous insult, that he resigned his occupation in Providence on the following day, returned to his home in Salem, asked for instructions from a certain well-known priest, and was received into the Church.

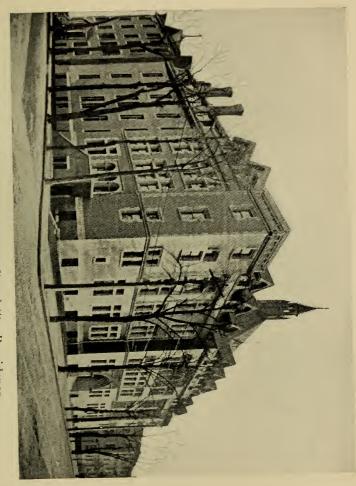
The stone house on Broad and Claverick Streets, dedicated to St. Francis Xavier, re-

mained the Mother House of the Providence community until 1894, when one of the finest conventual buildings in Rhode Island was built on the site of the old convent.

In 1855, the large brick building on Claverick Street was begun for the convenience of the Academy pupils. In one of her letters, at this time, Reverend Mother tells of a trip to New York in quest of teaching apparatus and helpful books "to aid the Sisters in teaching well the different classes in the free schools and Academy."

When the new building was finished, in 1856, Reverend Mother, with her perfect conception of the beautiful, had trailing vines trained on the walls of the garden side of the convent, and the grounds laid out in walks, and flower-beds so beautifully arranged that the convent garden was the admiration of the city. The cost of building the addition was met by the generous donations of the Bishop, clergy, and laity, to whom the Sisters of Mercy owe an endless debt of gratitude.

Concerning this cherished Parent House of New England, which was the scene of Mother Warde's patient labors, unremitting prayers, and



St. Francis Xavier's Convent, Broad St., Providence.



ardent zeal, we copy the following, written by an abler pen than ours, in the Golden Jubilee Souvenir of St. Francis Xavier's Convent, Providence: "A great deal of sentiment was expressed about this house (when it was 'torn down' in 1894, to make room for the new building), which had been so long the heart of the community. It had been a handsome building in its day, and much of its dignity and beauty clung to it. Even in its old age there was a certain richness of finish about the windows, the ceilings, the fireplaces, and the floors, which told the story of its having, originally, been the possession of a wealthy family.

"The outer walls, roofs, and chimneys, on the side toward the garden, were almost buried in luxuriant vines. It was remarked more than once, that nowhere else in America was there a structure of more continental, even mediæval appearance. This building was associated with a thousand hallowed memories, which are treasured up in hearts, both near and far. Little wonder is it that pieces of white stone were carried away as souvenirs, and that many visitors called to ask for a 'slip' of the thick creeping vine they had learned to love."

During the pioneer days, the folding doors of its double parlors were thrown open to accommodate the crowds of young women who flocked to the convent on Sunday afternoons to listen to Mother Warde's instructions. Thus she reached many persons employed in Providence, who had lived at a great distance from church or priest, and knew little of their holy religion.

In December of 1855, Rt. Rev. Bishop O'Reilly sailed for Europe to negotiate concerning certain plans he entertained for the progress of Catholicity in Rhode Island and Connecticut.

In a letter to Bishop O'Connor, previous to the departure of Bishop O'Reilly, Reverend Mother mentions the opening of eight extra classes in the different free schools already established, and describes the numerous cases of visitation of the sick and instruction of adults, ending with an account of the little orphans, whom she pictures as "sweet, guileless babies, some five and six, and some a few years older, beautiful enough in soul and body to have come to us direct from Paradise."

In February, 1856, Bishop O'Reilly embarked for the United States, but the ship in which he sailed was lost, and the Bishop and his party were never heard of again. Reverend Mother had opened missions in Hartford and New Haven in May of 1852. To these houses free schools were attached, and when the required accommodations were secured, one of the best academies in the country was established at Hartford.

From her journal we quote the following, written on her return to Providence, after the visitation of these branch houses, May, 1856.

"My ardent desire to see Christ's little ones trained under the guidance of religious teachers is coming to pass to an extent far beyond what I ever dared to hope or wish. How true is the old proverb! 'The first step is the only difficulty.'"

And again we read, "When I offered myself to God and to my Superiors to help to spread the works of our Institute on the American mission, I did not dream of the good to be done in educating the grand, sturdy, New England character."

Receptions and Professions of large numbers of subjects took place every six months. The first of these ceremonies was held in the church of Saints Peter and Paul, in August of the opening year. The Rev. Father McElroy, S. J., a dis-

tinguished Jesuit who gave the ten days' retreat of that year, preached the sermon for "the clothing with the religious habit."

Reverend Mother held the members of the Society of Jesus in very high esteem, and in the convents which she founded the majority of the semi-annual retreats are given by Jesuit Fathers. "In many respects," she used to say, "our spirit resembles the spirit of the Society, hence the Exercises of St. Ignatius make an excellent retreat for the Sisters of Mercy, whose duties embrace both the active and the contemplative life."

In the retreat of August, 1851, it would seem from Reverend Mother's journal that Father McElroy, S. J., laid special emphasis on the virtues of humility, charity, and self-denial, as the foundation of the religious life. Transcribed here are several of her notes:

- 1. "The tone of voice, and the whole bearing of a religious should be humble and subdued."
- 2. "At recreation, a religious should be cheerful and joyous; speaking clearly on entertaining, edifying subjects, because, that is the duty God asks her to perform at that time. At other times, she should observe the strictest silence and quietness of manner."

- 3. "Meekness and prayer are 'the arms' of a good religious."
- 4. "A religious should believe firmly that she has no rights, and therefore cannot be wronged."
- 5. "It has been the experience of Superiors, that the brightest intellects, and noblest hearts are found among those who are always ready to be employed in lowly positions. In these offices, they can imitate more perfectly Our Divine Model, 'Him who was beautiful above the Sons of Men' in heart and mind as well as in His Sacred Person. He chose the unobserved service of the poor and unknown as His dearest work on earth. The Pharisees loved the high places, and sought the honorable offices. The humble religious shrinks from being placed as on a candlestick, and only the voice of obedience can call her from the obscure and lowly employments."
- 6. "The natural life must be left outside the conventcloister. It were base for a spouse of Christ to lead other than a supernatural life. The faithful practise of humility, charity, obedience, and union with God is the safest road to sanctity. When the religious fails in the practise of these virtues, then her life may be said to be natural."

On May 3, 1854, Mother Warde opened a convent and schools in Newport. She placed Sister M. Gertrude Bradley in charge. On account of the opening of St. Joseph's School in Providence the January before the Newport

schools were opened, she commenced the latter with only four Sisters. Later, when her teaching staff was increased at the Mother House, she supplied the necessary number at Newport. In the *Annals* we read, "The convent was styled St. Marie's of the Isle, in memory of the exquisite convent of that title built on the Lee by Mother M. Josephine (Sarah Warde), sister to Rev. Mother Xavier."

Mrs. Goodloe Harper gave the convent and grounds in Newport. During the summers they spent at the "Rocks," their picturesque cottage, Mrs. Goodloe and Miss Emily Harper were true benefactresses of the community.

St. Mary's Convent has long since taken the place of the first inadequate building occupied by the Sisters.

# Chapter XIII.

PROGRESS OF THE INSTITUTE IN NEW ENGLAND.

REVEREND MOTHER instructed her religious very frequently on giving unremitting attention to the acquirement of the supernatural spirit. "Let us study ourselves honestly before Our Divine Lord," she would say, "and see if we have any ambition for high places or select classes. The poor are the especial friends of Jesus Christ, and should be the particular charge of the Sisters of Mercy, as mercy cannot be practised on those who are living in affluence. There must be destitution either in the spiritual or temporal condition of a person before the true spirit of mercy can be exercised.

"Charity may be practised on the rich, but mercy finds the object of its preference in the poor. Then let us do good to rich and poor, but always prefer the service of the destitute and 182 Rev. Mother M. Xavier Warde suffering, as did Our Divine Master while here on earth."

Egotism she considered a grave fault in the disposition of a religious; therefore, she instructed her Sisters to guard against seeking adroitly for praise and appreciation in their work; of bringing themselves, their families, or the part taken by them in the performance of any duty, into notice.

"These, and allusions to supposed abilities by a religious," she would say, "are evidences of self-conceit. Those who are most deserving of praise never realize they have done anything more than their duty. Neither have they. We are doing the work of God, and doing it for Him alone: then would we not be the basest of the base if we did not use our best efforts to do our work well? Duty faithfully performed, without ostentation, for the love of God is the sure road to a high perfection." Here she was wont to repeat a theme of instruction which our venerated foundress often gave in the early days at Baggot Street: "'How silently and brilliantly the lamp burns away before the Blessed Sacrament when the oil is pure! It is only when the oil is bad or adulterated that it burns noisily.'

## Progress of Institute in New England 183

"It is so with us. When we are seeking perfection, our days are consumed gently and quietly in the performance of lowliest deeds. But when we are hurried, noisy, desirous of 'shining,' when we cleverly manœuvre to obtain the 'first seats,' then we may be sure the oil of our charity is not perfectly pure."

"O, striving soul, strive quietly:
Whatever thou art, or dost;
Sweetest the strain when in the song
The singer has been lost;
Truest the work, when 't is the deed,
Not doer, counts for most."

In 1857, Reverend Mother made a foundation at Rochester, New York, where God has blessed in a wonderful degree the works of the Institute. The courteous Bishop Timon of Buffalo met Reverend Mother and her party on the way to Rochester, and insisted on their remaining at Buffalo for two days. Mother Warde, with her sincere veneration for prelates and clergymen, accepted his kind hospitality. While in Buffalo Reverend Mother and the Sisters went with Bishop Timon and Father Lynch, afterwards Bishop of Toronto, to see the college just established by the Bishop at Niagara Falls. They

crossed the Suspension Bridge to the Canadian side, and stood on the picturesque spot where Bishop Timon wished to erect a convent of Mercy. It was in a country place, and Reverend Mother's sagacious foresight discerned no opportunity likely to present itself for a community of the Order to exercise its spirit in works of Mercy.

A community of Loretto nuns from Dublin are established on this beautiful site.

With the foundation of the convent in Rochester, Reverend Mother opened free schools and a select school. Visitation of the sick and other works of Mercy were commenced at once. Within the year of 1857, Sisters went from Rochester to take charge of a school in Buffalo, at the request of Rev. Martin O'Connor, who proved himself in after years an earnest, devoted friend to the community.

Batavia, Auburn, Charlotte, and seven other convents have been established from Rochester. One of the finest industrial schools in the country is conducted by the Sisters there, besides an institution which receives and takes care of young children while their mothers are working in shops or factories. An employment bureau is attached to the Industrial School.

The Hartford and New Haven branch houses were a great consolation to Rev. Mother Warde during her time in Providence, and long years after she had ceased her labors there, she loved to see the dear faces of the members of those communities who had borne loyally with her the "heat and burden" of the humble beginnings in Rhode Island and Connecticut.

Mother M. Paula Lombard was the first Superior of the Hartford House. The Sisters attribute to Father Brady their wonderful success in the schools. His proverbial devotion to the cause of education and his great love for little children have passed as a heritage to his worthy successors.

From the first the Connecticut Sisters have spared no efforts in acquiring knowledge of the modern methods of teaching, and have secured for themselves the best educational advantages. Hence, their schools are fully "abreast of the times" in secular training, while the moral education is conscientiously given the first place in the curriculum of studies.

Sister M. Camillus Byrne, the god-child of our foundress, was one of the zealous workers in the early days of the Hartford Convent, and

Mother M. Pauline Maher was its second Superior. When the diocese was divided in 1872, and Providence became an independent See, Mother Pauline was made first Superior of the newly created Parent House at Hartford.

In New Haven the progress of the works of Mercy planted by Mother Warde has been equal to that of her other foundations.

The Sisters who teach in the parochial schools are paid by the Board of Education, as teachers of the same grades in the public schools. Thus do the Catholic taxpayers receive a just and equal share of the appropriation of public money for educational purposes, while exercising liberty of conscience in placing their children in schools where they will receive a thoroughly Christian training.

The splendid institutions of the Sisters of Mercy in Connecticut owe their success, under God, to Mother M. Pauline Maher and Mother M. Angela Fitzgerald, both received and professed under Mother Warde in Providence. Their characters were opposites — Mother Pauline being gentle and retiring in disposition; while Mother Angela was impetuous, active, and full of ardor; but they were true and trusted

Progress of Institute in New England 187 friends to each other, and firm admirers of our revered Mother. Her spirit continued to be transmitted by them to their communities, long years after she had removed from her great field of labor in Rhode Island and Connecticut to found the Institute in New Hampshire and Maine.

We quote the following, as given in the Annals:

"Mother Angela's executive ability was noticed by all who came in contact with her in business matters. Her mind was large and highly cultivated. In youth she was rather handsome, and at all periods of her life very dignified. For these qualities she was admired, but for the lovable traits of her fine character she was universally loved sooner or later, for like all positive persons the good Mother was often misunderstood and even blamed, when no cause for blame existed.

"In her early career Mother Angela was full of exuberant spirits, and was the life of the recreations. But, though cheerful to the end, years, sorrows, and physical pain subdued her high spirit, and sweet patience was the prevailing characteristic of her closing years."

The Rev. Father McFarland was appointed successor to Bishop O'Reilly, and was consecrated third Bishop of Hartford in 1858. While

Rhode Island and Connecticut constituted one diocese, the Bishop resided in Providence.

The Bishop-elect visited the convent on the eve of his consecration, thoroughly delighted at having the Sisters of Mercy well established in different parts of his diocese, laboring faithfully in the training of youth, and the other works of their Institute.

The next day, after the consecration ceremonies were over, Bishop Bacon of Portland appealed to the newly made Bishop for a few Sisters of Mercy to aid the faithful pastor of Manchester, New Hampshire, in the education of the children under his care.

Later, Father McDonald negotiated personally with Reverend Mother in the interests of his congregation.

Mother Warde's second term of office had expired in 1857, but on account of the vacancy in the Episcopal See, the administrator of the diocese would not allow her to resign until after the consecration of the new Bishop.

Bishop McFarland was consecrated May 14, 1858, and Reverend Mother resigned her office six weeks after his consecration. Mother Josephine Lombard was chosen Superior for the

Progress of Institute in New England 189 next three years, with Reverend Mother as Assistant.

In the latter part of May, Bishop Bacon visited the Providence community, and appealed strongly to Mother Warde to establish the Order in his diocese. He represented the children of the manufacturing towns as receiving only the intellectual part of education, while their moral training, so much more necessary, was utterly neglected, and their faith sadly endangered. Even with the Sunday School accessible to every child, yet, to develop sound Christians, he considered the day school taught by religious a necessity in every parish.

Since true education means the perfect harmony of physical, mental, and moral training, children, to grow up good Catholics, with a correct knowledge of Divine truths and a desire to practise the requirements of a Christian life, must be educated in the religious school, where the moral and intellectual faculties are developed in unison. Moreover, the teacher, the surroundings, and the atmosphere in the Catholic school tend to produce a series of impressions calculated to increase the development of the Divine idea in the conception of the child. He finished his

appeal by saying, with St. Ignatius, "Soul and body are God's, and must be thought of in education."

The community entered fully into Bishop Bacon's sentiments; but, as he had said to the Sisters, "Only the piety, the courage, the zeal, and the hardihood of a pioneer religious will ever be able to *rough it* in the establishment of Catholic schools in Maine and New Hampshire," the Superiors saw that the opening of the Manchester House meant the sacrifice of Mother Warde. Bishop McFarland was not in favor of her leaving his diocese, and consented with great reluctance, as he himself declared.

The Sisters were much more grieved over the new project than was the Bishop, for her going out from the Providence House would leave a community of lonely hearts. She was the first religious professed at the "cradle of the Order" in Baggot Street; had received her training from Mother McAuley, who had both loved and trusted her; and by constant intercourse with the foundress, had acquired her strong spirit of piety and solid views of the religious life. In the dainty souvenir issued in honor of the golden jubilee of St. Francis Xavier's Convent of Mercy, we read the following:—

# Progress of Institute in New England 191

"The Providence community had only been in existence seven years, and it seemed to require the guiding hand of its leader; but Mother Warde felt the Divine impulse urging her to enter on new and untried labors, and she confided her dear young community to the care of the Sacred Heart and the protection of our Immaculate Mother."

We see her, when the matter was brought under consultation by the Bishop and senior members of the community, approve of sending out the foundation, and if by obedience she were one of the number chosen, she would with God's grace make the sacrifice for His greater honor and glory.

During Reverend Mother's residence in Providence, she instructed sixty-three non-Catholics, who received the Sacrament of Baptism, and in nearly every case they continued to be fervent members of the Church.

Her self-denying religious were her faithful auxiliaries in instructing, visiting the sick, and relieving the poor. Two and two they might be seen, when not employed in the schools, performing with fervor and delight the meritorious duty of comforting the sick and dying.

Reverend Mother spared no pains in making

her subjects realize the meaning of the Rule in the words, "Let those whom Jesus Christ has graciously permitted to assist Him in the person of His suffering poor have their hearts animated with gratitude and love; and placing all their confidence in Him, ever keep His unwearied patience and humility present to their minds, endeavoring to imitate Him more perfectly every day in humility, patience, and self-abnegation.

"Thus shall they gain a crown of glory, and the great title of children of the Most High, which is assuredly promised to the merciful." And again, "The Sisters appointed by the Mother Superior to visit the sick shall prepare quickly; and when ready, shall visit the Blessed Sacrament, to offer to their Divine Master the action they are about to perform, and ask from Him the graces necessary to promote His glory and the salvation of souls."

"Little Sister Camillus" Byrne, the god-child of the foundress, had a special love for visitation of the sick. During the short time she had the privilege of being with Reverend Mother, she accomplished a great amount of good by her hidden acts of charity, while visiting and consoling the sick and dejected.

# Progress of Institute in New England 193

We learn from the *Annals* that when Mary Teresa McAuley, the niece of the foundress, died in August, 1837, Sister Camillus took her place in the novitiate.

On the feast of the Assumption, 1837, Mother McAuley wrote to Carlow, to Mother Warde: "Teresa Byrne has received the cap to-day to fill my dearest child's vacancy. She is delighted, and promises great things; may God give her the grace of holy perseverance."

In 1854, she joined Reverend Mother in Providence, and after faithful labors there and in New Haven, she was sent to assist Mother Catharine Wynne in Baltimore, where she spent twenty-nine years of earnest toil in God's service, before going to receive the crown of glory promised by Our Lord to His faithful spouses.

Mother Austin Carroll says, in commenting on her life, "Love for the poor was a passion with her. No matter how ungainly or even filthy a child might be, Sister Camillus would not repulse her; on the contrary, the greater the moral or physical needs, the greater her zeal for those she was called upon to succor. But devotion to the sick was the grand feature of her life. For a quarter of a century she had charge of the

visitation of the sick in Poppleton Street. There was not an urchin in any lane or alley for miles around the convent, not a convict in the Penitentiary, or an outcast in the House of Correction, who did not know Sister Camillus. Her ability for imparting catechetical instruction was unsur-She possessed a peculiar talent for repassed. claiming by her sympathy and her zealous words the most abandoned sinners. The number of lives reformed through her instrumentality, of conversions effected by her zeal, and of souls led to embrace the truth by her instructions are known only to God. In the sick room, her sympathetic manner and interest in every detail of the patient's trouble, and her impressive manner of saying the prayers, made her visits a consolation to the poor sufferers."

In Providence Mother Warde seconded Sister Camillus with advice, means, and help to do all the good possible in her much-loved duty of caring for the sick and disconsolate. Reverend Mother's note-books of touching examples, stories, and sacred verse were always at the disposal of Sister Camillus, and her tactful way of using them comforted many a despondent soul in her daily rounds of visitation.

# Progress of Institute in New England 195

A story is told of a sick-call that came to the convent on one occasion, and Sister Camillus, with her companion, answered the summons. The Sisters were directed to a neat cottage in the suburbs of the city, and there, in a small apartment, not more than twelve feet square, furnished with artistic taste, and arranged with exquisite tidiness, lay a young woman suffering from a lingering disease. Her golden hair clustered in wavy masses about a finely formed head. Her eyes were of a soft, dark gray, with an expression of beauty that is rarely seen. A faint flush was visible on both cheeks, while the sadness that rested like a pall on her lovely countenance was pitiable to behold.

Her manners were sweet and grave; but when the name of God was mentioned she broke forth into the most depressing murmurings against His Divine Goodness. It took some days to fathom the cause of this state of affairs, which was occasioned by her want of resignation to her sickness, since the doctors had pronounced her disease incurable, and possibly fatal at the end of a few months.

She was a non-Catholic, but some time before she became ill had accompanied a pupil of the

Academy in making a call at the convent. While there, she had met Reverend Mother, and was much impressed by her religious manner, and in the hour of sorrow it occurred to her that she could find some solace in speaking with the Sisters.

The family had been wealthy, but reverses and the death of both parents had left this delicate girl and an only sister alone in a palatial dwelling in the city. The mansion was seized by creditors, and the amount it netted at public auction was only a fraction of the liabilities. Thus were the two young women forced to rent the small cottage they now occupied. By her works of art the elder sister was supporting both; but as the younger one grew daily weaker and weaker, the artist was forced to lay aside the brush, and remain at her sister's side. Little by little the nuns comforted her, and drew from her the reason of her dejection and imprecations against the decrees of the Good God.

It was the old story of a lover, with inviting prospects, — wealth and honors to be hers, at a time already arranged, when sickness came upon her. The sacrifice proved too great for her to make for Him "who gives and takes" as He sees best.

No word that the Sisters could say, nor any prayer offered, seemed to soften or persuade her that Our Merciful Father in Heaven was not unjust in demanding from her the sacrifice of a life so full of hope and happiness. Yet she loved to listen to Sister Camillus as she read for her beautiful examples of a religious character and sacred poems which Mother Warde had inscribed in note-books for different purposes. most disconsolate moments the reading seemed to give her quiet of soul. One day, while Reverend Mother perused her notes for reading matter for Sister Camillus, she happened on some lines which she had copied from a book given her by a Scotch lady of note visiting Dublin, a short time before Mother Warde joined Mother McAuley. She handed the poem to Sister Camillus, saying: "If these lines make the same impression on your unhappy invalid they once made on a sinner I know, with the help of God's grace she will be converted unto the One Eternal Friend ever ready to comfort the weary and heavy-burdened."

When Sister Camillus read it over, she exclaimed: "Reverend Mother, you must come with me and read this yourself for our poor suf-

ferer, and I will pray, oh, so fervently, all the time; surely the Good God will touch her heart!"

The two set out, and found the sick girl more despondent than ever before. After some cheery words and consoling instruction, Reverend Mother read with much feeling, while Sister Camillus prayed with untold earnestness in the secret depths of her heart.

The lines ran thus: -

"One heart grows not weary, but waits uncomplaining Whilst thou art forgetful, and wayward, and cold; It welcomes thee back, and thy sorrow restraining, Gives love in full measure, and trusts as of old. One friend in adversity turns from thee, never; He stays by thy side when the faithless have fled; His love is the only love lasting forever; His hand, o'er thy pathway, all blessings has spread. One friend loves thee truly in sickness and sadness, Nor tires at thy murmurs, nor scoffs at thy pain; Is constant in gloom, and partakes of thy gladness, Oh, say, can such love all be lavished in vain? Why cling for a moment to love that must perish In death if it fails thee not sadly before? Why slight the true Friend, Who forever will cherish, Who loves thee, and, loving, must love evermore? Arise from thy fatal delusion and scatter The dream that enticed thee: thy idols cast down, -Nor spare the sweet smile that a moment could flatter, Then faded away at a shadow or frown. Arise, for thy life star is quickly declining, Death's valley is dreary; a friend must be nigh;

To whom thy weak soul all its burden consigning, May cling till the fear and the danger go by. That Friend, and that Lover, so faithful; so tender; Is He with the opened heart, Saviour and God; He, Who forsaking Heaven's glory and splendor, Once for thee, sinner, this dreary earth trod. Lie at His feet, they were wounded and bleeding; Give Him thy Love, though 't is worthless at best; Ask by the Heart still so patiently pleading, For pardon and pity, contrition and rest. Lavish the love so foolishly wasted, Love can restore thee, thy place in His Heart Drink of the sweetness none ever yet tasted, And found that earth's pleasures such bliss could impart. Love Him alone! He is jealous, though tender; None may compete in the heart where He reigns; All that thou hast, thou must freely surrender, And bind thyself captive in Love's golden chains."

The young sufferer could resist no longer the attractions of Divine Grace. She repented of her rash opposition to the wise decrees of God, and repeated the Lord's Prayer with the Sisters. She then asked for a crucifix that she might keep the thought of Our Suffering Saviour before her mind.

When the Sisters returned next day they found her full of contrition for her sins, and possessed of an intense longing to be united to God. She begged to see a priest that she might be received 200 Rev. Mother M. Xavier Warde into the one true fold of which Christ is the Shepherd.

Her request was granted; she was instructed and baptized, and during the few months of her sojourn on earth, despite the most excruciating pains, she kept her heart raised prayerfully to the tender Father in Heaven Who counts every act of suffering borne with resignation for His sake.

The Sisters continued their blessed task with grateful hearts, praising God while they comforted, and encouraged her to beg from the Holy Spirit an intense love and confidence in God. When she died every one felt that she had exchanged her bed of pain for the bliss and joy of Paradise.

# Chapter XIV.

#### IN THE "GRANITE STATE."

I N the Annals of the Order it is written: "New Hampshire, the Switzerland of America, is a grandly beautiful region full of picturesque streams, tall mountains, and dreamy lakes, and attracts more tourists than any other part of America except Niagara. But I pass by its stern, rugged scenery to write of a man whose titles to our admiration are chiefly of the supernatural order. To me the finest landscape is a painted picture, unless a human being enliven it. Faith tells of a beautiful, immortal soul imprisoned in a form gaunt and shrunken, and a prayer that we may meet in Heaven surges up in my heart. In the twinkling of an eye the landscape is made alive for me, and stretches from the lower world to the better and brighter land above. Father McDonald was for forty-one years the light of a manufacturing town; and when I think of its looms, and spindles, and fire-engines,

and forests of tall, red chimneys, and tens of thousands of operatives, Father McDonald is the figure that illumines for me this enterprising, imposing spectacle, and casts over it all a halo of the supernatural. Little cared he for the sparkling rivers, or bewitching lakes, or romantic mountains of the 'Granite State.' His whole interest centred in souls."

It was this pioneer of Religion in New Hampshire and of Catholic Education in New England who brought the first Sisters of Mercy to Manchester.

On the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, July 16, 1858, before taking the train from Providence, the foundresses received Holy Communion at the Mass said by Bishop McFarland, in the Convent Chapel, to invoke God's blessing on the undertaking.

Thus, with the Divine benediction resting upon them, amid the fervent prayers and sad adieux of Superiors and Sisters, Mother Warde and her little band of missionaries left Providence for Manchester, accompanied by Father Sheridan, whom the Bishop had sent to escort them to their new home, and bring him back tidings of their prospects for doing good.



The Rev. Fr. McDonald.



During their journey the Sisters "told their beads," begging our Lady of Mercy to obtain for their project the All-powerful aid and protection of her Divine Son. They also invoked the guardian angels of the Pastor and people of Manchester to plead before the Throne of the Most High that the Holy Spirit would enlighten, strengthen, and bless them in their exercise of the works of Mercy in such a manner as to give the greatest amount of honor and glory to God.

Father McDonald and the Very Rev. John O'Donnell met them at Nashua, and greeted them with paternal kindness. At the depot in Manchester the people flocked to welcome these first religious who had attempted to take up their abode in the "Granite State." Only a few years before, in July, 1854, the Know-Nothings had driven the Catholics from their homes, dragged the sick from their beds into the streets, destroyed the furniture, and then proceeded to break the stained glass windows in St. Anne's church, which was nearly completed at that time.

Father McDonald, by his peace-making spirit and wise executive ability, kept his people from retaliating. Subsequently good order and friendliness gradually grew out of the chaos caused by

angry excitement, as the spirit of prejudice exhausted itself. When persecution, resulting from bigotry, was at its height, Father McDonald had called a meeting of the parishioners to confer with them regarding the advisability of establishing a convent in Manchester, that the children might receive a Christian education. "For the first and last time" his people opposed him, saying it would be useless to attempt to introduce a religious Order. A convent would never be tolerated in the city. But the far-sighted priest could penetrate into the future better than his loyal people. He realized the difficulty at the beginning of such an establishment, but he was a firm believer in the good-will and right intentions of the non-Catholic residents of Manchester. He knew they would be among the first to appreciate and support the efforts of the Sisters of Mercy in their labors for the common welfare of mankind, once they understood the daily life of the religious, and learned for themselves that their impressions of nuns were untrue and unfair, because based on passions and ill-will resulting from prejudice. He knew also that the Sisters in their dealings with non-Catholics in the academies and elsewhere would, with tact and discretion, cement the cause of peace and Christian concord more effectively than could be done by any other agency.

He built his convent. True, an attempt was made to demolish it. This did not daunt the courageous priest. He went on with his undertaking, but the church and convent were guarded every night lest they might be destroyed.

On their arrival the Sisters were escorted to Father McDonald's residence, where they partook of refreshments after their journey. He then showed them the church. Here they thanked God for their safe arrival, and implored His blessing on this new foundation of the Institute.

Reverend Mother's devotion to the Blessed Sacrament was intense; her love for the Holy Spouse of her soul hidden in the Tabernacle was real and personal. In Father McDonald she met a kindred spirit in this fervent attachment to the Divine Prisoner of Love. When their prayers were ended, he showed the Sisters through his beautiful new church, then one of the finest in New England. Such an edifice, dedicated to the worship of God in those pioneer days, was a striking proof that "a generation stalwart" in the faith could prosper, and accom-

plish much for the glory of God and the salvation of their own souls, even amid opposition and trying circumstances.

As they paused to admire the artistic altars and neat, spacious sanctuary, this saintly man of God declared: "No hand but mine ever attended to the care of these altars. I myself have cared for the cleanliness of everything approaching the Most Holy Sacrament. No secular ever entered the sanctuary railings, even to sweep." Turning to Reverend Mother, he said, "Now I resign this sacred charge to you, as my priestly duties have become too numerous and too arduous to give the necessary time to this angelic office."

Then he led them, as is recorded in the *Annals*, to "a large, handsome building in the Grecian style of architecture, built for God, with every brick sanctified by the prayers of a man universally esteemed a saint. The ground on which it stood had been watered by his tears. He had wrought on it with his own hands, guarded it by day; and at night when the city slept, he was the watchman on its towers."

Once inside the convent walls, preparations were commenced for the coming of Our Lord

in the Blessed Sacrament. Before nightfall the convent was blessed by Father McDonald, and the Divine Guest dwelling on the Altar of the devotional little chapel. The convent was placed under the protection of Our Blessed Lady, with the title "Mount St. Mary's," owing to the elevation of ground whereon it was built.

When the Blessed Sacrament was deposited in the Tabernacle, two of the "lambs" of the flock came as delegates from the young people of the town, with a greeting of welcome, and a box of silver coins, that the nuns might purchase any furnishings necessary for the convent.

Thus, on the day of the Sisters' arrival in New Hampshire, the faithful Catholics commenced their kind offices of religious loyalty and generosity toward them, which, instead of abating with time, have grown through the years of wellnigh half a century, since the members of the Order of Mercy commenced their labors in this fruitful portion of God's vineyard. The older people followed with gifts and good wishes, all anxious to show their devotion to religion by the encouragement and support they rendered to the nuns, whom their faithful pastor had invited to his parish to aid him in his zealous

labors of instructing and training the youth of his congregation, who were, until the latest day of his life, his special solicitude and just pride.

The next morning after the arrival of the Sisters, Father McDonald celebrated the first Holy Mass offered in Mount St. Mary's Chapel. On this morning also, Mother Warde gave the first instructions given in the community-room of her new foundation, to the religious assembled for spiritual lecture.

From notes preserved, we give our readers the substance of her words: "The good religious is faithful in the practice of fervent exactitude about the time allotted for prayer, meditation, reading, and all the prescribed spiritual exercises. Those who are most fervent with regard to acquiring a spirit of recollection and prayer are also the earnest workers in whatever position they are placed. They realize that there is no duty of small importance in a religious community, because every one is working for God, and every effort must be used to do God's Work in the most perfect manner possible." She dwelt on the faithful making of the morning meditation, and the practice of fidelity to the inspirations of grace. She reminded her com-

munity that the Divine Voice often speaks to the heart of a religious, when her soul is immersed in contemplation, telling her what she must do to please most perfectly the Heavenly Bridegroom. The Divine monition is given in lowest, softest whisper, and if the soul be tepid and careless in making her meditation, she becomes distracted, and the noise and bustle of worldly cares, chasing each other in heart and brain, will drown the gentle whispering of heavenly inspirations. Sometimes she will be reminded by the heavenly monitor to overcome some fault of self-love, or, perhaps, to sacrifice love of ease and comfort. Again, will small acts of kindness, humility, charity, and gentleness be suggested by the Holy Spirit as the office which the Divine Lover wishes His spouse to perform for Him in secret, far removed from the noise of human applause; so unobtrusively as to be unnoticed and unknown to any save the All-seeing eye of the Divine Master.

She spoke emphatically of overcoming in the disposition anything that savored of sadness. "Since God loves a cheerful giver," she repeated, "let us try to be cheerful workers, taking nothing away from the glory of His blessed ser-

vice by half-heartedness in the discharge of our duties. We must be steeped in holy joy and eagerness to imitate our Divine Model in performing the lowly offices of labor and prayer; of teaching and instructing; of consoling the sick, the sinful, and the sorrowful. And how gentle, long-suffering, and patient it behooves us to be toward the orphan in the asylum, the child in the schoolroom, the sick on a bed of pain, the bruised hearts who come to lighten their burden, or the storm-tossed soul, weak and tempted, craving the peace and forgiveness of an offended, but Merciful God!

"On these occasions, let us ask ourselves, how would the Loving Master deal with such calls on charity, zeal, and patience?"

"He Who never made a brow look dark, Nor caused a tear, save when He died."

Bishop Bacon had intended to meet Reverend Mother and her community to welcome them to his diocese, but illness rendered him unable to carry out his plan of being in Manchester on the 16th of July.

Two weeks later, he addressed to her the following letter:—

"PORTLAND, MAINE, July 30, 1858.

"My Dear Child: — Hearing that you and your little colony would probably come to my diocese toward the middle of this month, I had made my arrangements to be free about the time of your arrival; but sickness obliged me to defer my engagements, so that at the present moment, when I would wish to greet you in person, I am denied that pleasure. But I hope to be able to welcome you in words before the end of next month.

"I returned from the extreme East yesterday, and must go back again to-night; my presence is expected, and is necessary in many places.

"You may be assured, however, that I bless a kind Providence Who has sent you and yours to aid me in my laborious mission, and that I shall spare no pains on my part to protect and assist your pious Institute in the different works of Mercy which it shall undertake. You may have your struggles at the commencement, but patience and perseverance will carry you through; and the day will come when your community will be numerous and prosperous, and when you will have houses in every section of the States of Maine and New Hampshire.

"Nothing shall be left undone by me, to make true the promise of the pious prelate of Hartford, that I would be to you a kind father and friend. I desire to be such to all under my charge, but more especially to those who labor with me for the welfare of my children.

"Please present my affectionate regards to your spiritual daughters, and receive for yourself, as well as for them, my benediction.

"Believe me, Yours Sincerely in Xto,
DAVID WM. BACON,
Bishop of Portland.

Sister Veronica Dillon, the postulant who accompanied Sister M. Rose Davis from Providence, two weeks after the Sisters were established in Manchester, was the first novice to receive the white veil in New Hampshire, and Sister M. Agatha, who came, a white novice, from Providence with the foundation, was the first to pronounce her vows of Holy Profession.

In August of the opening year, two ladies—a Baptist and a Universalist—came to the convent to be instructed in the Catholic faith. They were the first converts. Both reared large Catholic families. They gained the respect of every one who knew them for their steadfast integrity, industry, and good example. Since then there has never been a time when five or six (sometimes more) non-Catholics have not been receiving instructions at Mount St. Mary's. Hundreds have been baptized, and have brought other hundreds to the true faith by their edifying lives.

Reverend Mother never gave up her intense interest in converts until her dying day. When age, care, and a self-denying life had weakened her body so that she could scarcely walk, she managed to go, assisted by a religious on either side, to her devotions and spiritual exercises in the chapel, and to her loved duty of instructing converts.

Mother Gonzaga, who came with her to Manchester from Providence, was her faithful helper in this great work of zeal and charity; and when Mother Warde was no longer able to attend to this cherished duty, Mother Gonzaga took up the good work and continued it. Besides her labors of visitation and instructing, she has been the organizer of numerous Sodalities in the city.

During the early years, large evening classes of adult Catholics were instructed at the convent. Many an hour Reverend Mother and her religious spent at this blessed work, and many a time did she remind her zealous nuns that "those who instruct others unto justice shall shine as stars for all eternity."

For the working children in the manufactories Mother Warde established night-schools, where

the Sisters imparted instruction, religious and secular, to those dear children of toil.

In these schools the children were taught to read intelligently, to write, and to acquire a knowledge of numbers as far as would be of practical use in after life. Exercises in speaking and writing correct English were given an important place in the list of studies for the Evening classes. "The immortal ethics of the Ten Commandments" were made a study of prime importance, in accordance with the teaching of the Holy Ghost: "Fear God, and keep His Commandments. . . ." "Charity is the great commandment, — the one which contains all the others," — and "Holy fear is the needle which draws after it the golden thread of Charity."

"It is good for a man when he hath borne the yoke of the Lord from his youth."

"My child, give me thy youth, and I will guard thy old age."

Extensive free schools were opened for the girls in September of 1858. The classes were over-crowded, as every Catholic girl attending school in Manchester was to be found in the Sisters' schools.

Mother Warde established Mount St. Mary's Academy in the autumn of 1858. The pupils were accommodated in the convent. The northern half of the building was set aside for classrooms, music-rooms, and dormitories for the pupils. This school soon became an educational institution of note. Reverend Mother advertised the boarding school in the Boston Pilot and Boston Journal. This brought many promising pupils to the Academy. In the Annals it is noted that, "Among the first to notice the advertisement was Colonel P--- of New York. who was staying at the Parker House. Without reverting to what he did, he cut it out. A few days later he visited his ward, a girl of sixteen, under the protection of an uncle, a Presbyterian minister. She was anxious to finish her education at a fashionable academy. While speaking on the subject her guardian drew from his pocket the advertisement of Mount St. Mary's, Manchester, N. H. She read it and said: 'That is the school I shall go to, and no other."

By dint of her strong will, to Mount St. Mary's she came, in spite of the gentle persuasion of her aunt, the minister's wife, and the more sturdy opposition of her uncle.

The parents of this young lady, Harriet Stanley Dix, died when she was but a child. She had never been baptized, and could not be prevailed on to join any church. Her ambition was to "shine" in fashionable society. Before this time (1863) she had been introduced at the White House, and was esteemed very highly by President Lincoln, on account of her natural uprightness and strength of character. She was a handsome girl, and possessed a charming personality, but was thoroughly simple and artless.

She had a natural taste for study, and made use of every moment to fit herself for travel on the Continent. About two years after her admission to the Academy, one of her teachers, a religious of great exactitude of life, died. Miss Harriet entered the chapel to view her remains. Gazing on the features of this good nun, still in death, the truth of the words: "All is vanity but to love God and to serve Him alone," and, "What doth it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his own soul," dawned vividly on her mind. God's grace touched her heart, and in the Presence of Our Divine Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, she prayed for light and strength to do His holy Will. On returning

from the chapel, she hastened to Reverend Mother, begging to be instructed in the doctrines of the Catholic Church. Reverend Mother declined to do so unless the step met the approval of Colonel P——, the guardian of Miss Dix.

Miss Harriet wrote at once for his consent, and Colonel P——'s reply to her request is inserted here, as given in the *Annals* of the Order.

"New York, March 13, 1865.

"My Darling Child: — I hardly know how I feel about your Roman Catholic convictions, looking at it from a merely worldly and selfish point of view. But when I remember how my heart and hope and prayer for you have always been burningly eager that you might become a truly heavenly-minded person, I simply say to myself: 'Well this is God's Work and it must be right.'

"What seems to have most affected your mind is the death of the Convent Sister, and death is God's best lesson and teacher. I don't know whether it is best for you to join the Catholic Church. I can only pray that God, Who has begun your spiritual schooling, will complete the work, as seemeth to Him good. I only know this, that not all the felicity of earth would make me so happy as to know that you are steadily tending upward toward the pure, sweet heaven, where my mother is. You know you always reminded me of her. She was angelic in character and in love for me, her son. She died divinely happy.

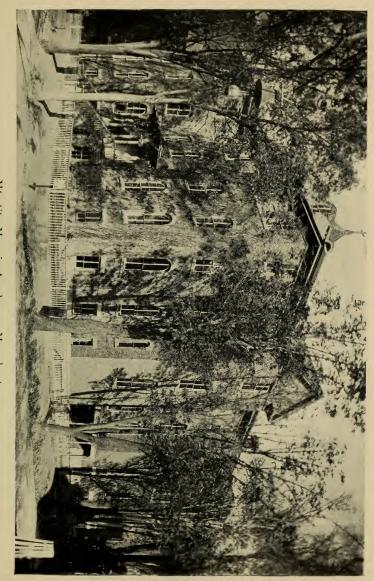
"If you really feel deeply in your very soul that the Catholic religion is the only true one, and realize how trivial and little *life* is, and how magnificent and unlimited eternity is, then follow the heavenly impulses of your lovely nature.

"I think you have a most pure and devoted soul, too lovely and delicate for this bad, bitter earth's rough contact. I want you to be sheltered in your remaining progress through it by a holy consciousness, and strengthened by a daily dependence on Almighty God. I feel that my own life is passing rapidly away, and the thought that you are going forward toward Heaven will comfort me in every remaining day of my totally unsatisfied existence.

"Observe then, my darling child, that I advise nothing on a subject so awful as religion. I say, follow God's leading wherever it goes."

Then followed some directions about her acquisition of an "elegant, lady-like handwriting," and the habit of spelling correctly. He warns her to "take much air and exercise," "to ride out frequently," and "to spare no expense in keeping herself in good health." Then he goes on to say:

"Did you read my magazine, especially the article by Dio Lewis? You may think me tedious for insisting so much on air and exercise, but I know well that the



Mt. St. Mary's Academy, Manchester.



mind will not work right, nor the mental conclusions be healthy and correct, unless the *body* is *well*. Pardon me, therefore, for keeping this everlastingly before you.

"I hope you remember me every day, as I do you. Let me know when you are baptized.

"Most affectionately Your Guardian, "E. G. P."

It is needless to say how pleasant Reverend Mother found the task of instructing this beautiful character. In Mount St. Mary's Chapel Bishop Bacon baptized her, gave her First Holy Communion, and administered the Sacrament of Confirmation. The *Annals* record that the ceremonies were closed with the Te Deum, "its tones, let us hope, echoed by Angelic Choirs." After some years she became a Sister of Mercy, and died while still young.

# Chapter XV.

MOTHER WARDE'S LABORS IN MANCHESTER.

In 1859 Father McDonald resigned a labor which had been his for many years, when he requested the Sisters to take charge of instructing the large classes of boys preparing for the sacraments. On the evenings appointed they came in hundreds to the basement of St. Anne's Church for lessons in Christian Doctrine.

Reverend Mother was much interested in them, and often instructed the larger ones herself. Several classes were formed in somewhat the same order as the Sunday School classes of the present day. Each Sister gave simple instructions to her class, intermingled with illustrations and Bible History stories, which held the attention of the boys, and impressed them with the chief principles of faith.

Hymns were sung at the opening and closing of the Instructions, and the delighted boys soon

Mother Warde's Labors in Manchester 221 showed a marked improvement. When Father McDonald realized the good influence of religious teachers on the education of the boys of his flock, he determined to prevail on Reverend Mother to supply Sisters for a free school for them.

For school accommodations he thought of a brick building vacant on Park Street, in the centre of a large Catholic population. This had been a public school, but was then closed, the *Annals* relate, because, "On a certain occasion the principal had spoken disrespectfully of the priest, and the assistants followed his remarks with a few of the unsavory calumnies then in vogue about the 'popish clergy.' The boys, nearly all Catholics, arose *en masse*, and put the teachers out on the street. This naturally suspended business."

This incident occurred during the first years after Father McDonald's arrival in Manchester. But having passed through the critical phases of his pioneer days in this city and the surrounding country, his industry, perseverance, and devotion to the spiritual welfare of souls finally won for him the unfailing gratitude of his own people, and the esteem of his non-Catholic brethren. He was totally devoid of human respect,

which made him strictly impartial in his treatment of all classes. This, with his energy and thoroughness, made him in his day and generation the one power to be reckoned with by state officials in matters affecting the Catholic religion. He had the respect of every man, woman, and child in Manchester, and when, in 1860, he applied to the City Council for the vacant school on Park Street, it was fitted up at public expense, and he was given the free use of it.

Mother Warde gave a staff of eight religious teachers, and, to act as Principal, Father Mc-Donald secured the services of Thomas Corcoran, at that time justly considered one of the ablest English scholars and teachers in New England.

The devotion to duty, and the conscientious work of this capable gentleman, during a period which covered over thirty-two years while he was connected with the Park Street School, will be remembered with admiration by all who labored with him in the education of the Catholic boys of Manchester.

Some of the brightest intellects of the city received their grammar school training within the walls of the Park Street building. Clergymen, doctors, lawyers, and men of every profession and walk of life, turn to it as their Alma Mater, wherein they were taught to lead pure, upright lives in the sphere of life God destined them to fill.

When the Civil War broke out, many of the senior pupils enlisted as soldiers and did gallant service for the Union. Many died on the battle-field, and many returned cripples for life from injuries sustained in defending the Union cause.

During the war the Sisters often received letters from their Sodalists and pupils, dated from camping-ground or hospital. These letters breathed the deep faith and piety of the writers, while exhibiting the beauty of their loyal natures. Space permits us to copy only one of these simple, soldier-boy compositions. It was written in the early part of the year 1862, and reads as follows:

"JEFFERSON CITY HOSPITAL.

"My Dear Sister G—:— I came here several weeks ago, dying as the army physician thought from the effects of a severe wound. The bullet well-nigh shivered my leg, and from the loss of blood and the pre-exhaustion of a weary, hungry march to the scene of action, I lay unconscious for days. I was preserved from death only by the protecting Hand of God, amid the storm of 'shot and shell' in that terrible fray.

"The medal of the Blessed Virgin which you gave me,

the evening before I left Manchester, I kept always with me, and I think Our Lady watched over me in a special manner.

"I was never pious, but, henceforth, I will do all in my power to prove my gratitude to the good God for this miraculous escape from death.

"The Sisters of Mercy are our nurses here. They spend much time among the dying. May their words of kindness and consolation to me, on my bed of pain, be recorded by angel hands in *letters* of *gold*, when they go before the Divine Judge to receive the 'well-done' of their noble deeds.

"I have held on to that rosary you gave me. It is the first I did not lose or mislay, through carelessness.

"We are well cared for here. The *blue* and the *gray* alike are supplied with every necessary comfort, by the good Sisters.

"Pray for me, Sister, that I may live to see my aged mother, who is 'all the world' to me.

"Your old pupil and Sodalist,
"STEPHEN W. R-D."

The Sisters received every mark of appreciation and trust from the officials in the different locations where they nursed the sick and wounded during the Civil War. Colonel Mulligan (whose dying words on the field of battle were, "Lay me down and save the flag") was always the champion of the Sisters of Mercy, whether in

Mother Warde's Labors in Manchester 225 camp or hospital, and when near them he saw that the suffering soldiers under their care were abundantly supplied with comforts, nourishment, and delicacies.

General Fremont and his staff were equally solicitous that the Sisters received for their patients all they desired. We read in the *Annals* that on one occasion "Secretary Stanton refused to furnish more rations during the current month." The brave officers, who would *brook* no uncourteous or penurious dealings with the religious engaged in nursing and consoling the wounded and dying, represented the case to the President, who immediately ordered:

To whom it may concern: On application of the Sisters of Mercy, in charge of the Military Hospital at Washington, furnish such provisions as they desire to purchase, and charge the same to the War Department.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

Mother Warde held poverty and labor in high esteem, and in the convents which she founded the Sisters labor unremittingly during the time not occupied in prayer and spiritual exercises. In food and clothing they use only what is plain and substantial, while the sleeping apartments,

refectories, and all the rooms in the convent for the private use of the religious are supplied with only the poorest and plainest furniture. chapel is as richly decorated as the community funds will admit, because it is the dwelling-place of the Most High. Reverend Mother's motto ever was, "I have loved, O Lord, the beauty of Thy house, and the place where Thy glory dwelleth." She thought nothing too magnificent for carrying out the exterior ceremonies of our holy religion. She wished at all times to set forth the beauty and grandeur of the faith in the most prominent light. For the convenience of the public, and the parents, relatives, and friends of the pupils of the Academy, the parlors are conveniently furnished, without mark of ostentatious poverty, but at the same time with simplicity and taste.

Mother Warde was occupied every moment during her long and useful life, consequently the labor and enterprise crowded into her life seemed almost miraculous. "I can do all things in Him, Who strengthens me," and "In Thee, O Lord, have I hoped, let me never be confounded," — these were her watch-words.

When kneeling in prayer before the Blessed

Mother Warde's Labors in Manchester 227 Sacrament she remembered to plead for all in need of God's grace and assistance; when laboring in the performance of her manifold duties, she united her intention with Jesus and Mary performing the household labors in the humble cottage at Nazareth.

"How pleasing," she would say, "in the Divine Sight are labor and prayer combined!"
"To earn our bread by the sweat of our brow" is enjoined by Almighty God on every child of Adam. Brain-work fulfils this obligation, but manual labor is more salutary and meritorious to the soul.

From a Dominican treatise that she admired greatly, she often read for her community a spiritual discourse on manual labor, which we will copy here for the edification of our readers:

"Humility, patience, and compassion for the poor are more easily cultivated amongst menial employments: the mistress, in imposing burdens which she has felt herself, is less likely to err against justice and charity; and the pride of intellect and condition is wonderfully subdued by submitting to the yoke which is carried by the multitude. The reflections that naturally accompany manual labor are of an essentially wholesome and salutary character; for the indolent are reminded of the penance due to sin, and the haughty are confounded by

the workshop of Nazareth. I know that the rich often excuse themselves from labor by urging as a duty of charity the employment of the poor; but the servant is not wronged by a share being taken in her toils, and occasionally one might employ others in light and easy work, and choose for one's own portion the drudgery of labor.

"It is astonishing how much time was at the command of the saints, and how little seems at the disposal of the generality of Christians!

"How eminently did the saints fulfil the duties of their state — union with God, devotion to the different offices their sphere in life called for, — and still they failed not to find time for those exercises of charity which only the few find time for at the present day.

"But even those whose fervor makes them visitors of the sick, will often prove their hands to be but cowardly abettors, if they are not willing to inure themselves to the mortification of sense; and spiritual consolation will fall coldly from the lips of such as dare not relieve at the expense of fastidiousness. Oh! what a powerful ally is the body to the soul who sees in it her servant, and accustoms it to serve; and under what a lamentable tyranny they groan, who, because they will not triumph over some physical repugnances, are compelled to leave unsatisfied the best feelings of their hearts."

Reverend Mother planned the delightful garden for which Mount St. Mary's was remarkable in those days. The spring and summer evenings, The altars were her special pride, and the Sister who received from our Mother this angelic office, was required to be a model of recollection and respectful demeanor in the performance of her duty, as well as a pattern of taste in the artistic arrangement of candlesticks and flowers.

On the great-feast-days she superintended the trimming of the altars in St. Anne's Church, until her multiplied duties no longer permitted her to give the time and attention which that duty demanded.

At the request of the Rt. Rev. Bishop Wood, in 1861, a convent was founded in Philadelphia. Sister M. Patricia Waldron was given charge of the community. The foundation was made in August, but Reverend Mother remained until the schools and works of Mercy were in successful operation. The Philadelphia community has been singularly blessed by God, and was very dear to Mother Warde.

One of the first institutions of charity in Manchester was the orphanage. On the corner of Beech and Laurel Streets, occupying what is now the Academy play-ground, stood three cottage-houses. The first was occupied by Mr. Walter Dignam, the organist of St. Anne's Church; the second was converted into a Home for orphan girls; and the third accommodated the classes of a Day Academy taught by the Sisters.

The "old boarders" have many droll reminiscences of these corner houses. Here, many were the moonlight pranks and clandestine lunches partaken of, and relished as only "forbidden fruit" can be relished by the average schoolgirl. The first orphan who found a home in the little cottage orphanage was a child of seven years of age, brought to Reverend Mother from the Alms House by Father McDonald. When she attained the age of womanhood she was apprenticed to a well-known dressmaker in the city, and attained great proficiency. Later, she married a man of means, and became mistress of a well-ordered home.

The orphanage proved to be so great a necessity that ere long the original cottage was

Mother Warde's Labors in Manchester 231 no longer able to accommodate the number of orphans admitted.

Father McDonald looked about for a suitable building and situation to make a healthful home for the orphans. His choice rested on the "Harris Estate,"—a delightful location, with extensive grounds in the heart of the city.

Through his lawyers he bought this valuable property for fifty thousand dollars. He could have doubled his money the next day. But he had purchased it for Christ's destitute ones, and not for a business speculation. The mansion was prepared for the orphans, according to Reverend Mother's directions, and her large-hearted idea of making it comfortable for those to whom God has promised to be a father. As Superior, she appointed Sister M. Liguori, who has proved herself the kindest of Mothers and providers for her orphan girls through all these years. How great will be the reward of this devoted religious and her self-sacrificing staff of Sisters when, on the last day, they stand before the Father of the Orphan only God can tell.

In 1864, on a lot on Union Street, opposite the convent, St. Anne's School was built for girls. In its day it was considered a superior

institution, with its large, airy classrooms, well-ventilated ante-rooms, extensive blackboard surface, and other educational advantages. In the summer of the same year the Omaha foundation was sent from Manchester. Mother Warde started to accompany the Sisters to Chicago on their long and, at that time, dangerous journey; but before reaching Chicago, she was recalled to Manchester by a telegram announcing the dangerous illness of her Assistant, Mother Philomena.

When Reverend Mother reached her, she was unconscious. She died on the eve of the feast of the Assumption. Her death was a severe blow to the Sisters, but faith taught them to look far above the passing events of earth, to the rich reward in Heaven which she had striven to attain by her unassuming life, so full of merit and good works.

Among Mother Warde's letters was found the following, written to her on this sad occasion by Bishop O'Gorman of Omaha. We copy it from the *Annals of the Order:* 

"Deeply do I sympathize with you in the loss you have sustained. But remember what causes you affliction gives glory to God and joy to His angels.

"The Religion, which is a remedy for every ill that flesh is heir to, was first announced to the poor by Him Who declared Himself by preference the God of Suffering, and Who seemed to have reserved His wonders for the wretched. That faith which you have so long taught by word and example, must be your comfort in the hour of trial, and give you that resignation to God's Will which it is always our duty to practise. Our Religion is one of sacrifice, and if it have no difficulty, it is vain. Let us try to be like the saints, who rejoiced when they had a sacrifice to make, and when God did not require one of them, imposed one on themselves. Besides you have not lost the good Sister. If deprived of her services here, you have gained tenfold by her additional advocacy before the throne of God. I shall not forget her at the Altar. I am already much devoted to her patron. I hope there are many saints of the name, and that she holds a distinguished place among them."

The foundation at Omaha flourished in the midst of heavy trials and privations. The Sisters teach several free schools and an Academy, and have charge of the orphan-asylum.

Bishop Bacon wrote from Portland in the spring of 1865, asking for a branch house of the Sisters of Mercy for Bangor.

Father Gillen, the pastor, would accept of no negative reply to his request for Catholic schools. He built a handsome brick convent for

the Sisters, near the rushing waters of the Penobscot, in the most picturesque part of the city.

When Bishop Bacon wrote to Reverend Mother, she obeyed at once, and began preparing the mission. Mother M. Gonzaga O'Brien was appointed Superior. With six Sisters to teach in the schools, and her "old child" in charge, she accompanied them to their destination, in August, 1865. Bangor was at that time a flourishing city, on account of its important lumber trade.

Pastor and people were delighted to have, at last, a religious community of their own, and seldom have the Sisters been more warmly welcomed than to this Eastern city.

The schools were opened at once, but the buildings were intended to serve only a temporary use, and provided poor accommodations for the immense throngs of children. The devoted people of Bangor persevered in their eagerness to send their children to the Catholic schools, in spite of the disadvantages to be borne with at that time, while the public schools offered many inducements from a worldly point of view. But the Bangor Catholics had only a short time

Mother Warde's Labors in Manchester 235 to wait for schools possessing the best educational advantages.

Mother Warde was much attracted to the children, and foretold the Sisters that they would find a certain sturdiness of character and clearness of intellect in them which would give grand opportunities to teachers for raising the standard of scholarship.

In Reverend Mother's letters to the Bangor community, she exhorts the Sisters to prepare themselves very conscientiously for the different classes.

At the urgent appeal of the Rt. Rev. Eugene O'Connell, a colony of Sisters was sent to Yreka, California, in 1871, and in May of the same year Reverend Mother accompanied Sisters to found a mission in North Whitefield, Maine.

This field of labor required from the Sisters much self-sacrifice, prudence, and confidence in God, as poverty and hardships were to be the portion of the noble religious destined to work for souls in this bleak, dreary portion of the country, far removed from the centres of commerce and religion.

Accordingly, the most trusted and zealous religious were selected for this trying, but meri-

torious field of labor. Sister M. Ignatius Kelly, Sister M. Gertrude McConville, Sister M. Ursula Bradley, — afterwards Superior of the Portland convent, where she died in April, 1881, - Sister M. Pauline Stapleton, and Sister M. Dominica O'Hanlan were those most closely connected with the schools and missionary labor of winning back the renegade and uninstructed Catholics of that section of the country. They braved the severity of the climate, often walking to school, through snowdrifts of amazing depth, and performed, with the Divine aid, great things for God; but with one exception, all of these devoted women contracted diseases from exposure and hardship which, in the course of a few years, proved fatal. Let us hope they are now enjoying the reward of their heroic sacrifices, in the blessed mansions of Heaven.

Miss Winifred Kavanagh of Damariscotta, Maine, was an unfailing benefactress of the Whitefield mission.

Jersey City and Princeton were the next places supplied with religious. These houses remained branches of the Manchester community for many years.

In 1872, Reverend Mother found herself, at

Mother Warde's Labors in Manchester 237 last, able to grant the favor the Rt. Rev. Bishop De Goesbriand of Burlington had constantly sought, of having Sisters of Mercy in his diocese.

She founded the Order in St. Johnsbury, but the community has since been transferred to Burlington. This made the fifth New England state in which Mother Warde established the Institute.

After returning from Vermont, she had yet another project awaiting her guiding hand. Bishop Bacon decided to open a Catholic orphanage in Portland, and after the delay caused by the fire of 1867, now asked for Sisters to come at once to commence this work of Mercy so dear to his heart.

Mother M. Gonzaga O'Brien was the first Superior of this institution. The orphans occupied part of the building on Free Street which is now the Convent of Mercy. The Bishop was much interested in the orphanage, and each child in it received the kind solicitude of his benevolent heart.

On an occasion when diphtheria spread in the institution, and the building was quarantined, the Bishop helped to wait on the sick orphans with his own hands, and aided in removing the dead from the infirmary to the chapel.

In 1873, he asked for twelve additional Sisters to open free schools for the children of his large, and constantly increasing congregation. His request was complied with at once, while the Lord seemed to raise up subjects to supply the numerous calls for religious teachers.

Miss Winifred Kavanagh donated the money to build the *Kavanagh School*, and at that time it was one of the finest school-buildings in New England.

An academy was also opened on Free Street, and here, as elsewhere, the Sisters spared neither labor nor pains to promote God's work for the good of souls.

Mother Warde seemed to have reached the summit of consolation, when she saw a "Home for Aged Women" in Manchester, under the care of the Sisters. A building on the "Harris Grounds" was used for this institution which has done, very modestly, its own share of good in the city and state.

Sister M. Aloysius Kelly was the first Superior. She labored unceasingly at the arduous duties of her charge for nearly twenty years, when failing health rendered her unable to endure the incessant toil, which her well-filled post demanded.

# Mother Warde's Labors in Manchester 239

The opening of St. Joseph's Boys' School, St. Joseph's Girls' School, and St. Agnes' School, within the space of a few years, necessitated the training of a number of extra teachers. But good subjects entered the novitiate, and Reverend Mother was able to supply all the additional classes.

In 1883, Bishop (then Father) Bradley remodelled the school-buildings connected with St. Joseph's Church, to accommodate more classes, and provided them with the modern improvements in teaching apparatus.

Some years later, he placed the Boys' School in charge of the Christian Brothers, who, besides teaching the intermediate and grammar grades, conduct a High School.

In 1874, Reverend Mother met with a heavy trial in the death of Bishop Bacon, who had been as a kind father to her and her community for the sixteen years since the Sisters of Mercy had been established in his diocese. This worthy prelate started for Rome, but on reaching Brest was so ill that he entered a hospital and sent for the late Very Rev. Father Barry, V. G., to come to him. On receiving the summons, the faithful pastor of Concord commenced his jour-

ney, and on reaching the Bishop, found him in a dying condition.

He begged of Father Barry to take him home, that he might die in his own land, and be interred in his loved cathedral, amid the prayers and tears of his faithful priests, religious, and people.

They undertook the homeward voyage, and but a few hours after their arrival in New York the beloved prelate died. His heart's great desire was granted, as he slept peacefully in Christ. His remains were reverently conveyed to Portland and laid in state before the High Altar of his cathedral, where his people thronged in thousands to gaze for the last time on his loved face.

From the sermon preached by Cardinal Mc-Closkey at his funeral, we give the following extract:—

"From Brooklyn he came to Portland, the first Bishop of this Episcopal city. He brought with him—characteristics which have distinguished him from the commencement of his ministry—an indomitable zeal, an energy of mind and body that nothing could intimidate. He shrank from no hardship. His life was devoted entirely to the work of his ministry and to the good of his people. From morning until night he was busy about some duty or some occupation of his office or ministry. His frugality, his self-denial, and his self-



The Rt. Rev. Bishop Bacon.



#### Mother Warde's Labors in Manchester 241

sacrifice were wonderful. The fruits of all this, after his twenty years of labor here, in this good city of Portland, are visible to the eye on every side, — beautiful churches, religious institutions, and houses of learning, which have sprung up everywhere through the state of Maine and through the adjoining state of New Hampshire.

"A body of zealous, devoted clergy has been gathered round him, and the progress of religion in the hearts of the people has been manifest to every one.

"Blessed are they who die in the Lord. His works have gone before him; his works will also follow him. He was an example to his people, not simply telling you, do this and do that, but setting you the example.

"And when you remember your great Prelate, you will, I am sure, not forget the words of God which he has spoken unto you. He sought only the welfare of your soul. He sought only to show you the way to Heaven, and to sanctify and to prepare you for it. Considering the end of his conversation, you will imitate his example. You will remember his many virtues. You will remember his exemplary life and conversation. You will remember his countless excellent qualities of mind and heart.

"You will remember him in your homes, in the bosom of your families. You will remember him before this altar, within the walls of this cathedral, which I may say, his own hands have erected. You cannot turn your eyes to any of its parts, without having before you the evidences of his zeal, the proofs of his exquisite taste, and above all the certainty of how much he loved

the beauty of God's house and the place where His Glory dwelleth. And as you remember the spot, where he was wont to pray for his people, you will remember how to pray for him reposing there beneath that throne upon which he sat so often, and where you have gazed with delight and consolation upon his paternal countenance. In your homes, in your families, pray for him, teach your children to pray for him; and may we all hope that our end will be like unto his."

Before sailing for Europe, the Bishop intrusted a letter to the care of Father Bradley (then Rector of the Cathedral, and later appointed first Bishop of the diocese of Manchester) to be opened in case of His Lordship's death. In this letter he named Father Barry Administrator of the diocese.

Mother Austin Carroll describes Bishop Bacon, possessed of "a magnificent physique and statuesque appearance, — his sunny smile giving his features an irresistible charm, especially in conversation." He attributed any good in him to the pious example of his worthy mother. Her last words to him when she was leaving this world were: "David! David! whatever may happen to others, take care of your own immortal soul."

# Chapter XVI.

#### LAST YEARS OF ACTIVE SERVICE.

A T the time of the death of Mother Pauline Maher, Mother Warde wrote to the Superior in Carlow the following letter, which was copied for the *Annals*, the source from which we take it for insertion here:—

" MANCHESTER, September 6, 1876.

"My Dear Mother Catherine: — Long since, you have heard of our affliction in the death of my cousin, Mother Pauline Maher (of Hartford). She is a great loss to her large and edifying community. We have ever been united as one heart and soul, so we feel her loss deeply. She was to have come to us after our retreat and theirs. Her death was peaceful, as her life was edifying.

"Her successor, dear Mother Angela, is a very fine, zealous Sister; she was Assistant to dear Mother Pauline. Both were received and professed in Providence in our early days there. I have written the sad news to our beloved Mother Cecilia. We have so much to do that we write little except on business, and it seems ungrate-

ful of me not to have written to Mother Cecilia for a long time, yet I do not write as often as I should to our branch houses.

"We have five branch houses in this diocese, and two in New Jersey.

"Here we have about eleven hundred pupils, and an Orphanage; in Portland another Orphanage and eight hundred pupils; a third Orphanage at North Whitefield, Maine.

"This is the Parent House, surrounded with every blessing.

"Our late dear Bishop, and our present Bishop, most kind. Our pastor, Rev. William McDonald, is considered a saint. His brother, Father Charles, is said to have lived and died one. Nothing is left undone for us in a spiritual way, and our dear Lord seems to have blessed us in a temporal way also, for we are out of debt.

"For the books received, I enclose a bank order for ten dollars. Please give the few shillings over the price to some poor sick persons, and ask them to pray for me and my charge.

"With love for all, especially my dear, old children, and your devoted self, in particular,

" Affectionately Yours in Christ.

On the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, 1878, Reverend Mother sent her religious to labor among the Indians in Maine, in compliance with the earnest wish of Bishop Healy.

Rev. Michael O'Brien, the late Vicar General of Portland Diocese, accompanied them to the scene of their labors. The Sisters' first convent was the wigwam of the Chief of the tribe, who vacated it for the nuns. We read in the *Annals* that "the Indians received the Sisters with great enthusiasm." From the same source we also learn that Mother Warde paid her first visit to the Indian Missions in the "early summer" of 1879.

"As soon as she and her companions reached the right bank of the river, the chief crossed in his own canoe, that he might be the first to welcome 'the great Mother.' The canoes are made of birch-bark, and have a rather frail appearance. The 'great Mother' seemed a little timid about taking so romantic a sail. The chief noticing this, at once procured a boat, and rowed her to the Island (the Indian Reservation), where old and young gave her a cordial greeting. The children sang a pretty song of welcome. It was a grand holiday. The 'great Mother's' first visit was one of thanksgiving to Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, where He resides among these lowly children of the forest, in their humble church, more dear perhaps to His Sacred Heart than

many a costly basilica. There she poured forth fervent thanks to God, for having selected her children from so many others for this great work, and she besought Him to continue His blessings to them, and preserve them in humility and charity.

"As she walked towards the convent, she exclaimed: 'Oh, how happy would our revered foundress be had she lived to see this!'

"The Indians then came individually to present their respects, and to thank her for sending the Sisters to them. Her generous, charitable heart was deeply touched. She assured them of her deep interest and prayers in their behalf, and distributed among them silver medals and other religious articles, which were received with pleasure and gratitude.

"They, in turn, presented her with baskets, the work of their hands, and brought their babes to make some little offering, and receive the 'great Mother's' blessing.

"Always grateful for the least favor, Mother Warde thanked them most graciously, and expressed her appreciation of all they had done for the Sisters. When Reverend Mother and her companions were leaving, the chief and his braves escorted them to the shore, where they found boats for the timid, and canoes for the courageous. Their 'staff' crossed the river, and remained as a guard of honor till they saw the party off for Bangor.

"Thus closed a happy and memorable day, which the Indians frequently speak of to their children. The 'great Mother' made a yearly visit to the Island, where the labors of her children gave such consolation. Nowhere is she more fondly remembered, or her Sisters more highly valued.

"Every Christmas she sent a gift to her forest children, which they would use only for the service of the Altar. In 1882, they bought with her offerings an exquisite frame for a striking picture of the Crucifixion, which they regard as a relic, because it was painted by an Indian artist whose holiness of life is a tradition amongst them."

The Sisters labor at Pleasant Point, Dana's Point, and the different Indian villages. The government builds the schoolhouses, and pays the religious salaries for teaching the Indian children.

These were the last missions established by

Reverend Mother in Maine, with the exception of the Deering Academy, Old Ladies' Home, and Hospital, founded in 1881, on an estate purchased by Bishop Healy for these purposes. Mother M. Petronilla O'Grady was the first Superior of the Deering House. The grounds comprise ten acres, seven of which are under cultivation. A grove of two acres of oak-trees adjoins the convent on one side, making the location picturesque and attractive. This House has been productive of much good, and the Catholics of Portland are justly proud of it. They maintain that the beauty of the surroundings and the educational standard of Deering Academy are second to none in the state.

Mother Josephine Warde died in December, 1879. Her death was a great shock to Reverend Mother, who was bound to this only surviving sister by a strong bond of affection.

Bishop Bradley of Manchester, then a young priest (Rector of Portland Cathedral) sent abroad to regain lost health, was present at the last ceremonies of Holy Church over Mother Josephine's remains, in the Convent of Mercy in Cork.

The following extract is taken from a letter written by him to Reverend Mother on the day of her sister's funeral:—

"Your good sister's sickness was brief, only of three days' duration. The immediate cause of her death was congestion of the brain. I had the melancholy pleasure of assisting at her funeral, and seeing the tomb closed upon her. There were present at the Mass, the Bishop, and fifty priests, and all the Sisters from the various houses in Cork who could be spared from their duties.

"If it be any consolation to you, my dear Reverend Mother, you may rest assured that your good sister had given to her in death all the honor you could desire. I have come in contact with many priests, and all speak of her in the most exalted terms."

In a newspaper of wide repute her death was recorded in the following words:—

"Died on December 15, 1879, at 'St. Marie's of the Isle,' in Cork, Rev. Mother Josephine Warde, Mother Superior of the Sisters of Mercy, Cork, Ireland.

"The life of one so noble, so heroic, so 'valiant,' as Holy Scripture calls it, is too precious, not only to her own Order of Mercy, but to all who appreciate and reverence what a woman can be and do, to be easily passed over in silence.

"Mother Josephine joined the Order, during the lifetime of Mother McAuley, in 1837, at the age of

twenty-four. Five years later, she was selected Mother Superior of the first Convent of Mercy in Cork; and in that same place for forty-two years, she labored for God, and was unceasingly occupied in good works of every kind.

"She was accustomed to say, 'A Sister of Mercy ought not to go to Heaven alone,' and her life fully carried out this generous intention — for it is not possible to enumerate the good works which her full hands have carried to her God.

"Being an elder sister of Mother Xavier Warde, who brought the Order of Mercy to this country in 1843, Mother Josephine took the liveliest interest in the American mission, and sent out many to join the Order in this country.

"During the epidemic of 1878, she consoled and encouraged the Sisters of Mercy in New Orleans, and assisted them most generously in their labors among the sick and dying.

"A few words from one of her own community in Ireland will best show how she was loved.

"'Even if she never did anything but walk through the convent, her very look was a sermon, — so dignified, so religious, so sweet and benign; and then the cordial welcome that beamed from her mild, sweet countenance when she met us coming in from our duties, so that no matter how tired or wet we might be, it refreshed us to get her kind motherly look and word. She was the soul of honor, and the living copy of our Rule. She was never without the Cross, and yet, no one would

ever know that she was suffering, it was so hidden. Her meekness, patience, and mercy were inexhaustible.'

"Such a life is full of consolation, of encouragement, and of example. If any one would know what is the true sphere of woman, let her but look at such a life as that of Mother Josephine Warde, and she will no longer doubt as to what is great and glorious in the eyes of God and men — a memory of benediction."

Mother Warde outlived all who were associated with Mother McAuley and herself in the foundation of the Institute; and when her Golden Jubilee drew near, in 1883, she was the oldest Sister of Mercy in the world.

Preparations for this event commenced in the latter part of 1882. Every convent of the Order joined in a Novena for the American foundress, and invitations were extended to numerous Bishops, priests, and religious to be present at the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of her consecration to God, by the religious vows.

The Sisters she had trained in the spiritual life were as intensely devoted to her as ever daughter was to a real parent, and they found a source of loving pleasure in their efforts to make this joyous occasion a festal celebration worthy of the venerable jubilarian.

Mother M. Catherine Clifford, the Mother Superior of the community at the time of Mother Warde's Golden Jubilee, addressed a form of invitation, nearly like the following, to the Superiors of all the convents:—

"Mount St. Mary's, Manchester, January 3, 1883.

"My Dear Rev. Mother: — Will you please accept the warmest invitation for yourself and any of the senior Sisters you may choose to bring with you to the Golden Jubilee of our venerated and loved Reverend Mother, on Wednesday, January twenty-fourth. From her numerous spiritual children, and each community of our Sisters throughout the world, we solicit a union of prayer in a Novena to the Sweet Mother of Mercy to obtain every blessing for one who has done so much to extend the greater glory of God by saving precious souls.

"We therefore ask you, dear Mother, to join us in fervent prayer, and also to notify your Sisters in the local houses.

"You will rejoice to hear that our venerable Mother is wonderfully well and actively zealous as ever in striving to gain the celestial crown of eternal glory.

"Greetings from the Community for a Happy New Year. I am, dear Reverend Mother,

"Yours Affectionately in Christ,
"SISTER M. CATHERINE CLIFFORD."

The Golden Jubilee — a memorable event in the history of the Order of Mercy in this country

— was celebrated on January 24, 1883, at Mount St. Mary's, Manchester. The occasion was a notable one, causing the deepest interest to the communities of the Sisters of Mercy throughout the Union, and in Ireland and England, as well as to the Catholics of Manchester and the vicinity, where careful preparations were made to do honor to the noble record of Mother Warde's consecration to God, and faithful service in His vineyard for fifty years.

At an early hour every avenue leading to St. Anne's, adjoining the convent, was thronged with people eager to gain admission to the church.

A Pontifical High Mass was celebrated at ten o'clock. The Rt. Rev. Bishop Healy pontificated; the Very Rev. Father Barry, V. G., was Assistant priest; the Rev. Fathers O'Callaghan and Hugh Roe O'Donnell were Deacon and Sub-deacon of the Mass; the Very Rev. Fathers Hughes and Lynch were Deacons of Honor; and the Rev. Father (now Bishop) Bradley was the Master of Ceremonies.

There were present in the Sanctuary His Grace, Archbishop Williams, the Rt. Rev. Bishop De Goesbriand, the Rt. Rev. Bishop O'Reilly,

the Rt. Rev. Bishop McMahon, and about fifty priests from different parts of New England.

From the text: "My soul doth magnify the Lord and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour, because He that is mighty hath done great things for me, and Holy is His Name," the Rt. Rev. Bishop De Goesbriand preached the sermon, in the course of which he read the vows made by her fifty years before, and said: "If I were to question Reverend Mother, I would ask her, — What of this service of God? How about its results in the present life? Our Lord has assured us that 'My yoke is sweet, and my burden light.' What has been your long experience? And how does the yoke of God compare with that of the world, — the pains of fifty years lived in His service with those inevitable in a life of similar length in ordinary human experience? The reflection instantly arises in the mind: Life's troubles increase, while those of one dead to this life, and living here wholly for God and His work, diminish; the effort is in renouncing the world, while after that step one's cross grows lighter, which in the world usually grows heavier."

The Right Reverend speaker then showed, in

eloquent and touching words, the sacrifices the Sister of Mercy makes in leaving the world. "She has to leave home and kindred, and make the threefold vow of poverty, chastity, and obedience for Christ's sake, in order to care for the sick and afflicted, and bring joy to many a poor heart."

After dinner the pupils of Mount St. Mary's Academy gave a delightful entertainment, consisting of tableaux vivants, music, and original numbers in honor of the Jubilarian, arranged to present a programme of a highly educational value. In the evening Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament was given in the convent chapel by the Rt. Rev. Bishop Healy, assisted by the Rev. William P. McQuaid; thus was this joyous day brought to an appropriate close.

Reverend Mother's Golden Jubilee gifts were many and varied, from friends who knew their valuable presents would be lovingly used to decorate God's House, or relieve want among the suffering and the poor.

From the Boston Pilot of that date we copy:—

"The centre and object of all this interest and joy well deserves the admiration she has inspired, and her

name and deeds should find a place in the hearts of all the faithful, and be meditated upon by all aspiring souls.

"Of an energy both mental and physical, rarely possessed by any woman, she is gifted also with fervent piety and boundless charity. With zeal, courage, and firmness, are united prudence, dignity, affable address, and rare executive ability. Her bodily vigor has ever been remarkable, and to-day, though threescore and ten years, she is the earliest in the chapel in the morning, and at all the spiritual exercises of the day, and is not excelled by the youngest and most ardent of her sisterhood in the regular duties that each day brings.

"The vocation of a Sister of Mercy is varied and ample. Rev. Mother McAuley's conception and aim were to unite the active life of a Sister of Charity with the contemplative and devotional life of a Carmelite. Accordingly the Sisters of Mercy teach and nurse, yet spend nearly six hours each day in united devotion.

"Their rules of life are strict, and its duties unremitting — patient with youth, cheery with age, ministering to the sick and in prisons, inspiring fortitude, resignation, and hope, yet their personal and cloistered life is never neglected.

"Rev. Mother Warde's choice, though made when so young, was no mistake. Her talents, her longings, her capacities were not wasted or treated lightly, but were respected and treasured; received as they were from God, to Him she consecrated them, offering herself unreservedly for His sake to the service of her fellow-beings. And to-day these gifts, their use, and their fruitage are recognized, and are held up to a world that needs the lessons they convey. From all over America, from Europe, from the antipodes (Australia and New Zealand), congratulations and love-gifts pour in upon the last survivor of the original Baggot Street foundation.

"Our Holy Father, Pope Leo XIII., accorded a special indulgence to all the Houses of the Order to be gained by Communion on this eventful anniversary.

"The clergy have paid their tribute of honor; the inmates of four hundred religious houses felicitate her and unite in prayer to second her pious intentions, and the faithful everywhere will recognize her lofty purpose and noble self-sacrifice in a life full of Glory to God, and good to man."

From the pen of Rev. Father Edmund Hill, C. P., an English convert and author, who, with his brother Passionist, Father Fidelis Stone, C. P., was sincerely devoted to Mother Warde, we quote the following beautiful stanzas, written for her Jubilee:—

<sup>&</sup>quot;'T was a jubilee day, our first Mother's first daughter,
When setting your face towards the Western afar,
You braved the long leagues of the storm-haunted water,
To follow the Shining of MARY the Star.

<sup>&</sup>quot;On toiled the good ship, bringing nearer each morrow, Its message of Mercy, its burthen of love; Seven offerings of faith from the 'Island of Sorrow' A mystical band, with the seal of the Dove.

- "But you were the chief in that virginal Seven;
  And lo, when their feet touched America's shore,
  'T was the day your Saint Xavier landed in Heaven,
  And the blessing he gave you abides evermore.
- "Again 't is a Jubilee day! brave, pious Mother!
  Your daughters stand up in this home of the free,
  And bid to-day echo the joy of another,
  Which dawned, ere you followed the Star of the Sea.
- "'T was the morn of your bridal, the troth you then plighted, How faithfully kept we your children attest, You may count us by scores and we greet you united With happier scores who have gone to their rest.
- "This Jubilee spousal this calm Golden Wedding, Lights up like a sun-set the grace-fruited past, And we hail in the peace its sweet radiance is shedding, A pledge of the glory to crown you at last."

Among the many letters of congratulation that came to Reverend Mother on her Jubilee Day, only a small number have been preserved in the *Annals*.

Having the greater glory of God in view, some of these we copy here, for the edification of our readers. From the Rt. Rev. Bishop Hendricken of Providence, "too ill to be present," came:—

"I entertain for Rev. Mother Warde sentiments of the deepest affection, and send a thousand blessings. She is a grand, historical character. Her works are benedictions to the Church. The community which she almost founded continues to pour its streams of charity on God's poor, and to fill Heaven with holy souls."

The Rev. Father O'Connor, S. J., wrote from Boston College: —

"Dear Rev. Mother: — Congratulations and good wishes from the fathers of our house and myself for your Golden Jubilee. Be assured of my fervent rememberance of you at the Holy Altar, where I will beg for you, from the Divine Master you have served so long and so well, grace and happiness unto length of days here; and hereafter, unending Jubilee anear Our Lady of Mercy, in Heaven."

From the Rev. A. Young, C. S. P., New York:—

"As Very Rev. Father Hecker and I have been promoted to the rank of *General Invalid*, it will be quite impossible for either of us to make the journey to Manchester, at this season of the year, in order to be present at the great occasion of your Golden Jubilee.

"Therefore, we are going to make an act of virtue out of this unwelcome necessity, and do that which costs us the most while this joyous festivity is being celebrated — which is, to stay at home. Indeed we would both rejoice, dear Reverend Mother, to show you, as you are most worthy to receive, our fraternal respect and heartfelt congratulations. In what I am saying to interpret the

directions of Very Rev. Father Hecker, and as the expression of my own feelings, I am repeating as well the sentiments entertained by all our community. I add for myself (and no doubt with willing assent of everybody) that, if we of the clergy do not stay you up and strengthen your soul by prayers at God's Holy Altar, then we are little deserving of having had such a woman and such a religious in our day and generation. It is to be hoped that in fifty years' time of service to the servants of God, you have managed to acquire enough humility to bear just a little praise to your face.

"May Our Lord bless you, love you, and give you joy and divine peace here and hereafter."

From the Rt. Rev. Abbot Wimmer of Pennsylvania, who with his monks had exercised such kindness and charity to Reverend Mother and her community nearly forty years before, she received:—

"Hearty congratulations from myself and the whole community. At this writing, I find myself seventy-five years of age; fifty years a Benedictine, and fifty-one years a priest, therefore too old to travel so far, despite the pleasure it would afford me to be present at the ceremonies to take place on this joyful occasion in the sight of Heaven and earth.

"Praying God may add many years to your useful life, and finally to receive you into His Heavenly mansions,

"I remain," &c., &c.

The Passionist, the Rev. Father Edmund of the Heart of Mary, wrote the following to the venerable Jubilarian:—

"It is certainly a grand thing to have been in religion fifty years. Ah, what a pledge of your own perseverance, dear Reverend Mother, you already have!

"And what a consolation it must be to your heart, to look back over such a vista of years and see the many vocations which have begun, continued, and ended under your fostering rule!

"Do you not feel like holy Simeon when he sang his Nunc Dimittis? Could you not use his beautiful words as you look back on the past, so thickly strewn with mercies?

"Ah, how good God is! How sweet and true the Sacred Heart of Jesus! How faithful and tender the sweet Heart of Mary!

"To God be all praise for what you and your sisterhood have done in this great land. God bless and keep you always, my very dear friend."

The saintly Mother Catherine Seton of New York was too feeble to attend the Jubilee, but did the honors to her old and esteemed Sister and friend by writing:—

"How I wish some angels of Mercy could descend to this lower earth and bear me on their wings to your side, that with a warm embrace I could congratulate

you on your Golden Jubilee. But being unlike my sainted namesake whom they favored with such ethereal transportation, a heavy old sinner like me might not be so sure of reaching you safely in such an aerial expedition.

"But romancing aside, dear Mother, the weather and old age make me fear any extra fatigue, for eighty-two cannot bear much. My health is good; my faculties and senses are good, so that I begin to fear that there is no present prospect of my exit to the better land, but I keep my lamp trimmed for fear of a surprise."

Mother Catherine Maher of Carlow Convent, received by Reverend Mother in 1839, wrote:—

"I congratulate you most warmly on the glorious event of your Golden Jubilee. Your long, useful, and happy career reminds me of a legend you used to tell us 'long, long ago,' of 'The Monk Felix,' whose beautiful ecstasy was immortalized by Longfellow.

"Such is your position now, when glancing back at the day and place of your holy espousals; all your companions have passed away to the heavenly city, where they join with the 'angelic chorus' on this great festival; and you, beloved Mother, are the object of such a bright happy meeting on earth and in heaven. The numberless prayers offered for you will lift you so high off terra firma that you will have to strain your ears to catch the sweet melody of your loving children still surrounding you at Manchester, 'Felix-land' to-day."

The beautiful lines inserted here came to the revered Jubilarian as precious echoes of loving remembrance from her dear spiritual children from over the sea:—

TO REV. MOTHER M. XAVIER WARDE, FROM HER COMMUNITY AT WESTPORT, IRELAND, JAN. 24, 1883.

May the white-winged bright angels, those spirits sublime,
Who enraptured keep watch round the throne,
Bear all our fond greetings from Erin's green Isle,
To that land which you now call your own.

Many dear ones their tributes of love will present, And we, too, in our home far away, Would in spirit unite all our wishes with theirs On this bright Golden Jubilee-day.

May each moment, each year, since that thrice happy hour When the first time you plighted your vows,
Be presented to-day, and with merits replete,
As sweet incense ascend to your Spouse.

If we seek cherished spots in our dear Island Home Where the seedlings of Mercy you've cast, Carlow, Westport, and Wexford, and Naas will recall Brightest memories, beloved of the past.

To you our dear Foundress her spirit bequeathed;
Led by it, how oft you've unfurled
The standard of Mercy in far distant climes,
Thus to shed its soft rays on the world.

Earthly Jubilees shadow yon land of the Blessed.
Yes, the Heavenly Bridegroom is there,
Enriching each moment that glittering crown
For you gemmed with such Fatherly care.

When the aged religious read the following sweet song of "the dear little Shamrock," her eyes filled with grateful tears of appreciation.

TO REV. MOTHER M. XAVIER WARDE, WITH SHAMROCKS FROM St. Patrick's Grave, Convent of Our Lady of Mercy, Mt. St. Patrick, Downpatrick, Ireland.

We send you the "leaf of bard and chief,"
The shamrock never old,
To bear on its verdant page, though brief,
Our wish for your Day of Gold.

May its hours be blest
In your home of the West
As our dear little shamrock when given
By St. Patrick's hand
To our own loved land,
'Neath the smile benign of Heaven.

No care it knew,
As it drank the dew,
This stem, 'neath the trees that wave
Their branches wide
On the green hillside
O'er Saint Patrick's hallowed grave.

No brilliant dye
To charm your eye,
No fragrance to impart,
Has our shamrock got,
Yet shall it not
Be dear to your Celtic heart?

A type of the love Of our Mother above, For the child of her cherished "First-Seven"; As green as our spray For your Jubilee day, With her smile and her blessing from Heaven!

# Chapter XVII.

#### FAILING HEALTH AND DEATH.

DURING the winter of 1883, Reverend Mother commenced to show symptoms of a sudden failure of strength. In the Lenten season she had a severe spell of sickness, but before Easter-tide she was again to be found each morning at her post before the Blessed Sacrament. As the warm, sunny days of spring lengthened into summer, her health improved, and her voice at prayer had its old-time vigor and impressiveness.

When the twenty-fifth anniversary of the foundation in Manchester was observed on the Feast of Mount Carmel, July 16, 1883, every one remarked her sprightliness, sincere cordiality, and modest simplicity, as much her characteristics on that day, although past the age of seventy, as they had been in her youth.

By the direction of the Rt. Rev. Bishop Healy, before the August Retreat of this year, the religious laboring in Maine were constituted a separate community. St. Elizabeth's Convent, in Portland, became the Parent House, with Mother Warde's trusted and much-loved spiritual daughter, Sister M. Teresa Pickersgill, Mother Superior.

In her youth she had made great sacrifices to become a Catholic, and was among the first converts instructed by Reverend Mother and baptized by Father McDonald. She was also one of the first graduates from Mount St. Mary's Academy.

Mother Teresa's first council in the Portland Mother House consisted of Sister M. Clare Leeson for Mother Assistant, Sister M. Adelaide Donahoe for Mother Bursar, and Sister M. Petronilla O'Grady for Mother of Novices. The election of the Mother Superior in Manchester took place at the same time; Mother Warde was unanimously chosen. The Sisters felt that in all probability she would receive her eternal crown before her term of office expired; but they were convinced that God would be pleased with this act of loyalty and loving homage to the aged religious and venerated Mother who had founded more convents than even the great

spiritual Mother, Saint Teresa, and who had journeyed more miles than St. Paul, in her errands of mercy and zeal for souls.

After the election, the ten days' retreat was given to the assembled religious at Mount St. Mary's, by the Rev. Father Campbell, S. J. Among some notes written in her Journal, during this retreat, we find:—

August 12, 1883. "May the Cross of Christ be about us! O good Cross, that makes us rejoice in the Holy will of God. Close to God, all is peace and contentment in Him. They tell me I am growing strong again; they try to hope it is so, but I feel old age is here, and I realize that very soon I am to stand before the Great White Throne, to render an account of my stewardship. It is an awful responsibilities of being careless and failing in the binding duties attached, and awful opportunities of rejoicing the Sacred Heart of Jesus by making every circumstance fruitful for God's greater glory.

"I can say with the eminent Jesuit whose 'Spiritual Direction' is now before me, 'Shall I be able to go on doing the little I have hitherto done? I do not know; but I put myself without reserve in God's Hands. Let us pray and give ourselves up to the Divine Will."

A few days after the retreat, Reverend Mother sent her religious to take charge of the parochial

schools in Dover, New Hampshire. This mission was a source of great consolation to her on account of the wonderful activity and charity of the zealous pastor, the Rev. D. W. Murphy, who encouraged every pious undertaking of the Sisters, and left nothing undone in providing all the ways and means his great, fatherly heart suggested as helpful to the religious in doing good, and promoting the glory of God among His people.

Sister M. Francis Leeson was appointed the first Superior of the Dover community, and to her Reverend Mother confided minute directions and encouragement for the training of the little ones to be educated by the Sisters.

The handsome school-building which welcomed to its portals the children of Dover was at that time one of the finest in the two states. Father Murphy, now Rt. Rev. Monsignor, dedicated the school to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and the convent to Our Blessed Lady.

Many interesting notes are inserted in the *Annals* of this branch house fraught with so many blessings for souls. The first band of religious picture in their letters the beautiful classrooms, with the delightful view from the win-

dows of Dover hiding itself amid the foliage of its grand old trees and verdant hillsides. "If God," they write, "will only make this one of His chosen places for blessing children it will be perfect in loveliness."

Reverend Mother failed considerably in the October and November of 1883, but kept at her duties, and said all the public prayers in choir with the same impressive unction for which her prayers were remarkable, and which cannot be forgotten by any one who ever heard her pray. During the nine days previous to the Feast of St. Francis Xavier, December 3, she recited her favorite novena at the Visit to the Blessed Sacrament after Supper. This was to be the last time she would make this beautiful devotion to her great patron.

To hear her say, in earnest pleadings, St. Xavier's Act of Love for God was to be lifted far beyond the trifling cares and trials of this fleeting world to the "Jasper gates" and "streets of pearl" in the Heavenly land.

In the winter of 1884 she had frequent attacks of illness, and her failing sight and feebleness in walking gave warning that she was nearing "Home."

During the latter part of March and the first of April Reverend Mother continued to fail. In Holy Week news came from Rome that the Rev. D. M. Bradley was appointed first Bishop of Manchester by Our Holy Father, Pope Leo XIII.

As a child, the Bishop-elect had recited his Catechism lessons to Reverend Mother, and had received his First Holy Communion from Father McDonald. Even in those tender years they had noted the spiritual tendency in his boyish aims and propensities, which seemed to foretell God's special designs for him. In youth they saw him choose the high and holy calling of the priesthood; and now his elevation to the episcopacy came as a crowning joy to the closing years of their lives.

Through the month of May preparations were in order for the Consecration Ceremonies, and despite her feeble condition, Reverend Mother, assisted by a Sister, came to the chapel and community-room for the Spiritual Exercises, and spent each day praying, writing, and supervising the making of some episcopal vestments to be worn at the Consecration of the Bishop.

Before the Bishop-elect commenced his retreat

on Pentecost Sunday, in Troy Seminary, where he had been ordained a priest fourteen years previously, he came to visit the aged religious, and to solicit her prayers. On his return, he again visited her, and even in the short space of ten days found her changed very visibly.

He was consecrated first Bishop of Manchester on the feast of St. Barnabas, June 11, but she was too ill to be present with the other religious, who occupied a private chapel in St. Joseph's Church, to witness the episcopal consecration of one whose active solicitude for the spiritual and temporal welfare of the communities of his diocese is without parallel in the history of the Order.

During the summer vacation of 1884, many of the senior Sisters from the different foundations in New England obtained permission to visit the venerated mother and receive her blessing, before her departure from her religious here, to join the community in Heaven.

This was a great joy to Reverend Mother. She spoke to them of the near approach of her death, and the great pleasure it gave her to see them once more before God summoned her to the Heavenly Home above.



The Rt. Rev. Denis M. Bradley, D.D.



Her sight failed rapidly during the summer months, and before the end of July "the eyes that saw once, so distinctly, objects far and near," were almost totally without sight.

When no longer able to see, she used to bless God for knowing so many fine prayers which she had committed to memory in her youth. Acts of love, hope, resignation, and contrition were ever on her lips during the entire period of her illness. On the morning of the sixth of August, she was helped by the Sisters to the parlor to await the Jesuit Father who was to give the ten days' retreat. While there she became so ill that it was necessary to assist her to her sleeping apartment. The Sisters made her as comfortable as possible in bed, and summoned the doctor, who found her in a condition too weak for medical aid. She rallied, however, and sat up each day, praying and giving directions about the affairs of the community.

Her favorite aspirations were, "Let all be lost, provided God be not lost!" "O Sweetest Jesus, be to me a Jesus!" "O my Saviour, suffering and dying on the Cross for me, be a Saviour to me when I stand at the Judgment seat of God!" "Holy Virgin, Queen of Heaven,

show thyself a mother to me at the hour of my death." "O Jesus, be my strength, I have no hope but in Thee."

On the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, by the prudent direction of the Bishop and Father McDonald, she received Extreme Unction. The latter, who had been her Spiritual Director for over twenty-five years, administered to her the last Sacraments. Sorrowfully, but with hope in their hearts that she would be restored to health, her religious knelt with lighted tapers around the bedside of the revered mother, so soon to hear the sentence of the Equitable Judge. She, whom God had "chosen from amongst thousands, and called to be His spouse, and to stand with the Lamb upon Mount Sion, and to be of the forty-four thousand having His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads."

Every event of Reverend Mother's sickness and death was full of consolation. The Bishop watched over her with the tender solicitude of a devoted son, that no anxiety or uneasiness should disturb her. Father McDonald remained her firm support and adviser to the end. All the religious in the convent vied with each other in

their filial affection and delicate attention to their venerated Superior.

During life she had always feared the account to be rendered to God at death of "graces neglected, — omissions of duty, — works imperfect and unatoned for, shrinking from the all-seeing, all-enlightening light of the Eternal eye," but as death drew near her fears gave way to calm, trustful hope, while in perfect peace she awaited the coming of the Divine Master to pronounce the "well-done" that would place her forever with the saints in Paradise, where "death shall be no more, nor mourning, nor weeping, nor sorrow."

To Mother Teresa, her devoted spiritual daughter, whom she loved with tender affection, Reverend Mother gave many wise counsels regarding the good government of the community in Maine, intrusted to her pious care.

To Mother Gonzaga, Mother Catherine, Sister Philomena, and the faithful religious who were her attendants, she said several times during the last days of her life: "My long and stormy life is at last coming to an end." Many a time had her life been rough and full of bitter trials, but none save her director and a few trusted

members of her community were ever permitted to gaze on aught but the silvery linings of the dark, heavy clouds that overshadowed at various intervals her pious, useful life. How often do perplexing events and trying circumstances, like gnats around a candle, thrust themselves into the bright, warm lives of those who undertake great things for God's honor and glory! On the evening before her precious death she sent for the community Sisters, and gave them her dying blessing. Each spoke to her in turn, and received loving counsel and a warm leave-taking before her departure for Heaven.

Mary Agnes Warde, the grandchild of her brother John, had entered the novitiate a few months before. The dying Superior asked for her, and showed tender affection for this young girl, who had regarded her with a childlike trust and love since she had been bereft of her own parents some years before.

A few of the senior Sisters remained near her until 10 P. M. Then she sent them to bed with the words, "God bless you and love you every one." She kept Sister M. Philomena and Sister M. Regina, two religious who had been her faithful attendants during the feebleness of her fail-

ing health and old age. They were to keep watch, and if a change for death appeared were to call the other Sisters.

A few hours after midnight the agony commenced. Sister M. Philomena called some of the senior Sisters, and they recited the Prayers for the Dying.

She only spoke in broken whispers, but kissed the Crucifix, and seemed to pray with intense fervor before sinking into an unconscious state. At daybreak all the nuns had assembled around her death-bed, and Father McDonald was summoned. He offered prayers for her happy death, gave her the papal benediction, and then went to the church to say his Mass, which he offered for her.

The venerated Abbé Hogan, so widely known in connection with St. John's Seminary, Brighton, Mass., was offering the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass in Mount St. Mary's Chapel for the grace of a happy death for the dying religious, when she expired amid the prayers of her sorrowful community. There, in the early morning of Wednesday, Sept. 17, 1884, the lifeless body of the American foundress lay. So well did she observe Poverty, that the rude hut

wherein her holy patron lay down to die, on the border-land between China and Japan, was not, we think, more bare than the poor cell, seven feet by nine, which she occupied, refusing the conveniences of the Infirmary. Nor could St. Xavier's couch of branches and skins be much more ascetic than her iron bed and hard mattress, which, with a crucifix, a plain bureau, and a chair mean enough in appearance for the lowliest cabin, constituted the furnishing of her sleeping apartment. The hand of her faithful co-laborer during long years pressed down the lids of her sightless eyes and closed them forever to this sad and fleeting world.

The Rev. John J. Lyons commenced the Holy Mass in the convent-chapel for the happy repose of her soul. The body was clothed in the religious habit, and laid on the narrow iron bed whereon she died. Groups of her sorrowing religious kept watch, offering earnest prayers for the speedy entrance of her soul into eternal glory.

On Wednesday evening the body was reverently placed in a plain pine coffin, and carried to the chapel. There, at the foot of God's altar, rested the precious remains of our revered

Mother, her hands clasped on her breast, holding the formula of the vows she had made to God nearly fifty-two years before; and the Rosary, whose decades she had piously recited each day for a lifetime, lay entwined in her fingers. Her little book of daily Examen scrupulously "kept," was placed under her right arm, in the coffin.

She had requested, on her death-bed, that her burial should be arranged in the simplest and most religious manner, befitting the obsequies of a Spouse of Our Crucified Lord. Bishop and the senior members of the community respected her pious wish, and held her opinion, that only a modest funeral would be appropriate for one who had embraced voluntary poverty. But as the convent-chapel was too small to accommodate the thousands of townspeople, all anxious to look for the last time on the revered face of the religious woman who had, perhaps, done more good for humanity than any other woman on the American Continent. the Bishop and Father McDonald thought it was a privilege due to the Catholics of Manchester to have this pioneer religious and foundress buried from the parish church. From the dawning of morn on Saturday, private Masses were 280 Rev. Mother M. Xavier Warde said in the convent-chapel for the repose of her soul.

At nine o'clock the procession commenced to move to St. Anne's Church. Before the coffin. and directly behind the cross-bearer, walked nearly one hundred priests, including the secular clergy and representatives of the various religious Orders in New England. Behind the coffin the Sisters walked two and two, attired in church cloaks. Senior Sisters from each of the Convents of Mercy in New England were present, and a large number of the "Sisters of Jesus and Mary," then the only other religious Order in Manchester. The silence was broken only by the tolling of the bells of St. Anne's. Long before the time fixed for the funeral, every portion of the church was crowded, while thousands stood in groups outside to get a view of the coffin which held all that was mortal of the humble religious destined to be a prominent figure in the history of the Church in the United States.

A Pontifical Mass of Requiem was celebrated by Bishop Bradley. Appropriate music was sung by a choir of religious, with Reverend Mother's favorite musician, Sister M. Beatrice, presiding at the organ. There were present in the sanctuary the Rt. Rev. Bishop Healy of Portland, the Rt. Rev. Bishop De Goesbriand of Burlington, the Rt. Rev. Bishop Hendricken of Providence, the Rt. Rev. Bishop O'Reilly of Springfield, and the Rt. Rev. Bishop McMahon of Hartford.

After the Absolution was given by the Rt. Rev. Bishop De Goesbriand, the Rt. Rev. Bishop Healy preached the funeral sermon. He commented on her warmth of devotion, strength of purpose, and spirit of sacrifice and fortitude, and ended his discourse by saying: "Hers was a life of humility, but full of the glory of the saints. Hers was a life of poverty, in her long years of strict practice of the common life prescribed by the Rule, yet full of the riches of sanctity and grace. Hers was a life of mortification, setting self aside to minister to the wants of humanity; yet what honor this noble life gave to the Heart of the Divine Master, whose Mercy is above all His Attributes.

"How many tears has she dried from sorrowing eyes! How many has she soothed and solaced in suffering and distress! How many souls has she enlightened in the law of God's Commandments! How many by her example have been encouraged to lead high and holy lives! 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord!' Beautiful beatitude of death! Canticle surpassing all Canticles; first spoken by the voice of God. 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord!' She has passed away from her devoted religious, who will miss, each day, her experience, her kind, motherly advice, her wise government. The never-wearying care, the sweet and tender love, the grand religious presence can never come back, but she is living the true life; she continues to be the guide and protector of this community, whose glory she will ever be in that heavenly abode which, by God's grace, her virtues and mortified, useful life of prayer and good works have merited for her."

On leaving the church, the procession, in closed carriages, wound through the streets, followed by vast throngs of the laity, far outside the city limits to St. Joseph's Cemetery. Here, her last resting-place lay ready to receive the remains. The Rt. Rev. Bishop Bradley and Father McDonald stood together, at the head of the coffin, pronouncing the last prayers over the grave, as the cold earth closed in and covered her from human view. The faithful clergy, sorrow-

ing religious, and devoted townspeople surrounded the spot to be henceforth cherished as the burial-place of Rev. Mother Xavier Warde. The Sisters' burial-ground in St. Joseph's Cemetery is kept sacred from the public eye by an enclosure of full-grown evergreens, planted by the direction of Reverend Mother. The entrance from the east — cut through the trees is picturesque and beautiful. Her grave is in the centre, circled about by a concrete walk. A marble shaft is erected in the form of a cross. bearing the inscription: —

"Rev. Mother Mary Francis Xavier Warde, Foundress of the Order of Mercy in the United States, December 21, 1843, and of Mount St. Mary's Convent, Manchester, N. H., July 16, 1858. Died September 17, 1884, in the 74th year of her age and the 53d of her Religious Profession."

"Grant to her, O Lord, Eternal Rest."

A few feet, to the northwest, are the graves of the religious who have gone BEYOND to the "Better land," from this diocese. These graves are marked by plain white marble crosses. To the southwest of Rev. Mother Xavier's grave is that of Ethel Xavier Stone, the little daughter of the eminent convert, James Kent

Stone, now the Rev. Father Fidelis of the Passionist Order. Before becoming a religious, he brought his three little girls to Mount St. Mary's Academy, and confided them to Reverend Mother's special care.

The three children were baptized in Mount St. Mary's Chapel, and, in compliment to Reverend Mother, her father gave Ethel *Xavier* for a middle name. This angel-child lived only a short time after her baptism. Her pure soul was never stained with sin, but guileless and lovely in her baptismal innocence she went to join the choirs of the blessed.

Reverend Mother had her buried in the Sisters' cemetery, and erected over her grave a white marble cross, inscribed "Ethel Xavier."

A local paper, in describing the spot where the remains of our venerated Mother are laid, says:—

"If the scene from the eastern side is beautiful, sublimely so is the vista from the western gate. With so many living figures telling of life's great object all around; the song birds singing sweet requiems in the trees, and the Merrimac making a peaceful curve away off to the east, one can well imagine that in such a place, Thomas à Kempis might have written in his Following of Christ, 'Vanity of vanities, and all is vanity but to love and serve God.'"

The Divine Master for whom her life was spent in a world of cares and sorrows had regard for her soul's deep love for the beautiful, in ordaining her body to be laid to rest in a spot sublimely impressive in the solemn aspect of its beauty.

Among Mother Warde's traits of character, piety and charity were the most prominent. Her great respect for clergymen was a marked characteristic, and she frequently impressed her religious with the reverence to be entertained for "God's Anointed." Repeatedly would she emphasize: "We are not worthy to touch even the hem of their garments." "Oh, the holy reverence that should be implanted in the hearts of our pupils for the sacred character of God's ministers!"

Another noticeable trait in our revered Mother was her ingenuity in putting a bright side on the most trying circumstances. She always lived, according to her own version, in the most delightful city, ruled the best community, dealt with the most agreeable persons, enjoyed the kindest and most spiritual Superiors and pastors. Father McDonald, in his usual droll fashion, used to remark, "All Reverend Mother's geese are swans."

Her faith and confidence in God were as childlike and implicit during all her years as in the days of her Novitiate. Even the tone of her voice in the recitation of the office and prayers touched all hearts around her.

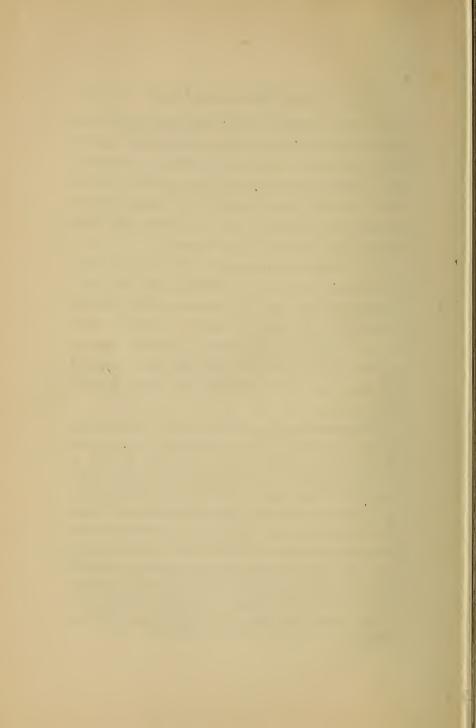
Her generosity to the poor no doubt called down upon her community many substantial blessings. The senior Sisters tell of her first days in Manchester, when the convent was very poor. On one occasion, a person in distress came to her for an alms, when only a few dollars remained in the community treasury. She listened to the sad story of want, which she knew to be true, and withdrew. Returning in a few moments with all that she had, she placed it in the hands of the person asking for aid. Before evening of that day, a donation of quite a sum of money was left at the convent, and the Sisters were never again in such straitened circumstances. Humility and contrition seemed to be the prevailing sentiments of her old age. quently did she dwell on the inscrutable judgments of God, and the awful responsibility of occupying the chair of Superior in "God's House."

After her pious death, through the exertions

of a devoted religious who knew and appreciated her wishes and sentiments, a Memorial Library was established in Mount St. Mary's Academy, as a fitting monument to the memory of the noble woman who founded this widely known school, and presided over it during the first twenty-five years of its existence.

The following paragraph, taken from a sermon preached by His Lordship, the Rt. Rev. Bishop Bradley, on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the foundation of the Order in the United States, seems a suitable closing to our humble sketch of the life and labors of the foundress of the Sisters of Mercy in this country:—

"Fifty years ago they numbered seven. To-day they number thousands, and are established in fifty-eight dioceses in the United States. We were favored in having as foundress one who drank in the spirit of the Order at its very source, one who governed this community for twenty-five years, the revered Mother Warde. She now rests amongst the hills of New Hampshire, in this land which was very dear to her. 'Rests,' did we say? We think she rests not, but is as near to each of her living children as to the dead by her side, reminding them of the blessedness of their high vocation, and of that reward exceeding great which awaits them in Heaven."





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